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Tuesday, 14 March 2006, 10.15 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Mayoral	(Argentina)
Members:	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Mr. De Rivero
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Denisov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2006/145)

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06-26986 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2006/145)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Iceland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Koenigs to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/145, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Koenigs: I would like to thank the Council for this opportunity to report on the situation in Afghanistan during our deliberations concerning the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The written report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/145) describes key events of the past six months, together with proposals for adjustments to that mandate. My remarks will focus on developments since Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno's last briefing to the Council, on 10 February, and on prospects for the Afghanistan Compact.

As the Council is aware, the London Conference on Afghanistan, which was held on 31 January and 1 February, reaffirmed the strong commitment of the international community to support Afghanistan for the next five years and beyond. In many respects, the benchmarks and time frames laid down by the Afghanistan Compact are as ambitious as, and even more wide-ranging than, those of the Bonn Agreement. By endorsing the Compact as the framework for international partnership with Afghanistan over the next five years, the Council recognized the mutual obligations and the discipline that is needed to ensure the implementation of that road map, which aims to improve the lives of Afghans.

It is already clear that two priorities will be essential to the success of that agenda. First, Afghanistan's institutions must be strengthened on all levels to the point where they are effective enough to deliver basic services. Secondly, our strategy for tackling hard security challenges must evolve to meet outstanding threats.

As to political developments, the first months of work by the new National Assembly have demonstrated the promise of Afghanistan's new institutions. Both houses have established rules of procedure and sector-based commissions. Security and development issues have been freely debated. On

27 February, the Wolesi Jirga decided to question and confirm cabinet ministers on an individual basis.

The coming months will test the ability of the Afghan Government and parliament to work constructively to adopt a new budget, agree on the composition of the new cabinet and forge a legislative agenda that reflects national priorities under the new Compact. An assembly of all provincial councils in Kabul in early March showed the determination of those elected representatives to deliver early results.

The political agenda is also increasingly focused on justice-related issues. President Karzai has indicated his determination to significantly renew Afghanistan's Supreme Court. He has also agreed to launch the Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation, together with the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and myself, in the coming weeks. In the meantime, initiatives to deal with past crimes in Afghanistan are gaining momentum. In a much publicized case, a former head of intelligence in 1978 and 1979 was sentenced to death on 25 February 2006 by the National Security Primary Court for his part in the assassination of prisoners. The trial was closely followed by Afghans and was criticized for failing to conform to international standards of due process. It nevertheless illustrated the strong aspiration of Afghans to truth and justice with respect to the crimes committed over decades of violent conflict.

As to security developments, the bomb attack in Kabul directed against Meshrano Jirga Speaker and former President Mojadeddi two days ago illustrated the importance that Afghanistan's enemies continue to attach to disrupting the democratic process by violent means. The attack was emblematic of national trends with regard to security, which continue to be a serious concern.

The winter months of 2005 and 2006 have witnessed a rise in insurgent and terrorist attacks and more sophisticated tactics. There has been a marked increase in the incidence of larger and more deadly explosive devices, including suicide bombings, particularly in the South and East of the country. The perpetrators of those attacks have shown a growing intent to target civilians, Government officials and reconstruction workers, such as road-builders. The recent kidnapping of four foreigners in Helmand province and an unconfirmed report of the Taliban claiming to have killed them are also of great concern in that respect.

The prevalence of such attacks in Farah, Helmand, Kandahar, Kunar and elsewhere points to the persistence and even consolidation of the command and control networks of Taliban, Al-Qaida and associated groups in the region. Any resolution of that challenge will require redoubled international efforts to dismantle terrorist structures that represent a common threat to the security of both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

There are also security concerns in provinces less affected by insurgency and terrorism. In Farah province, the senseless killing on 4 March of Afghan engineer Mohammad Hashim, a contractor to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, has shocked and saddened the United Nations family. In Helmand and Nangarhar provinces, large-scale poppy eradication efforts have encountered determined resistance.

At the same time, the Afghan Government has moved to address those threats both by policy and successful crisis management. At a seminar held in Kabul from 26 to 28 February, the National Security Council considered a blueprint for Afghanistan's national security policy. It calls for fully functional Afghan security institutions addressing internal and external threats to peace and security in an integrated fashion, under civilian supervision, and on a fiscally sustainable basis.

Addressing security issues, the completion of security sector reform remains crucial to the peacebuilding process. The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) programme has gained profile and momentum in recent weeks. In total, over 19,000 weapons have now been collected in all parts of the country. In Kapisa province, under the leadership of the Governor, a complete survey of those groups targeted for disbandment is being finalized, and that process will be repeated over the coming months in Farah, Herat, Laghman and Takhar provinces. Since the nationwide ammunition disposal programme began last year, over 30,000 tons of unwanted and dangerous munitions have been consolidated and destroyed. However, it will require strong and sustained commitment to meet the benchmarks for DIAG, munitions and mine action prescribed in the Afghanistan Compact.

The key development within the international military forces in recent weeks was the transfer of Regional Command South under Operation Enduring Freedom from a United States to a multinational brigade on 28 February in Kandahar. Once fully fielded, that force will feature robust capabilities from the armed forces of Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Australia and other countries, with a deployed strength of 6,000 troops in Afghanistan's five southern provinces. That represents an increase of 50 per cent over previous levels and shows international resolve to meet the threat of terrorist-based insurgency.

Improved border management is also required to meet several key objectives under the Compact, from drug interdiction to revenue collection. At the Doha II Conference, co-chaired by the Governments of Germany and Qatar on 27 and 28 February, 21 States and eight international organizations reaffirmed their commitment to improved cooperation with Afghanistan on border security and border management. However, I remain concerned that the resources are not yet available to implement those proposals, including with regard to police and border police salaries.

The agenda before the Government of Afghanistan and the international community is a heavy one. Whereas the Bonn Agreement was centred on the re-establishment of legitimate national institutions, a key challenge under the Afghanistan Compact will be to extend the reach of Government at the local level. That will require security, development, civil society and private sector actors to be more present in areas not yet touched by recovery. It will require programmes that ensure the participation of Afghans in the development of their country, while meeting the needs of vulnerable groups and poor regions.

It will also challenge Afghanistan's Government to make functioning institutions of justice and the rule of law more and more a reality in the communities in which most Afghans live. It will also require the implementation of Afghanistan's new obligations to protect and monitor the human rights of its citizens.

Afghanistan can meet those expectations only by reforming and strengthening the Government institutions necessary to develop its human capital, harness the potential of agriculture and natural resources and set conditions for the emergence of a vibrant private sector. Enhanced regional cooperation in that regard is also essential.

The report before the Council outlines a number of proposals on how UNAMA, having completed its support for the Bonn process, can continue to play a role as a special political mission, providing advice to the Government of Afghanistan in particular with a view to further strengthening its State institutions. UNAMA would continue to be an integrated mission and to plan and coordinate United Nations humanitarian and development activities. As co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to be established by the Compact, UNAMA would aim to promote Government visibility in international assistance activities and to advocate greater coherence of the overall reconstruction efforts. As the Secretary-General noted in his report, success in this endeavour will "also depend on the mutually reinforcing role and full cooperation of all stakeholders."

As I mentioned earlier, it will be vital for the Afghan Government to extend its reach to underserved areas of Afghanistan. The proposals submitted for the Security Council's consideration therefore include the possibility of a modest expansion of UNAMA's field presence to accompany and support the Government in these efforts, subject, of course, to security conditions. The implementation of this mandate would require additional and sufficient security resources, including air and medical evacuation support.

As the clock of the Afghanistan Compact starts ticking, the first benchmark — the establishment of a clear and transparent appointments mechanism for senior-level civil service positions — will need to be met after six months.

By endorsing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness last week, the Government of Afghanistan underscored the need to harmonize its efforts and those of the international community to ensure that our common vision for sustainable peace and development is realized in Afghanistan.

In closing, I would like to call upon the Afghan Government to do its utmost to meet the benchmarks set out in these documents and to encourage the international community to show continuing generosity and commitment in this next important phase of the peace process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Koenigs for his briefing.

Before opening the floor to speakers, I wish to request all participants to limit their statements, as far as possible, to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to work efficiently within its timetable. I thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this regard.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): First, I would like to thank Mr. Tom Koenigs for his presentation of the Secretary-General's latest report on the situation in Afghanistan and on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), including its new mandate. I take this opportunity also to wish Mr. Koenigs every success in his important and demanding duties as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be made by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. Furthermore, I would like to make the following remarks.

The report of the Secretary-General comprehensively covers all major developments that have taken place in Afghanistan during the past six months. The holding of the parliamentary and provincial elections on 18 September and the inauguration of the new parliament on 19 December brought the Bonn process to a successful conclusion. The adoption of the Afghanistan Compact at the London Conference on 31 January, and its endorsement by the Security Council on 15 February, set in motion the new process for attaining full-fledged political and socio-economic development in a peaceful, stable and secure environment, under the leadership of the Afghan Government.

UNAMA's contribution to these overall positive political developments has once again been indispensable and commendable.

However, we are well aware of the many and serious challenges still facing Afghanistan. We agree with the observations made by the Secretary-General regarding the need to complete reforms in the security, administration, justice and humanitarian sectors, as well as to establish the rule of law and full respect for human rights, especially in those provinces where warlords and drug networks continue to reign.

In particular, we are gravely concerned by the recent escalation of violence against civilians, aid workers, the Afghan military and international security forces, moderate politicians, Government employees and educators. If such incidents continue, all efforts and activities aimed at the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact will be at great risk.

We look forward to the amelioration of the security situation, mainly through the further strengthening of the Afghan National Army and police forces and the launching of the programme for the disbandment of illegal armed groups. In addition, we believe that the expansion of International Security Assistance Force forces in the south and the strengthening of the work of provincial reconstruction teams will lead to improving security and facilitating reconstruction and economic development in the countryside.

Of course, the underpinning of the armed attacks, violent clashes, suicide bombings and burning of schools is the narcotics industry. The Afghan Government and the international community have undertaken serious measures to tackle the problem, but so far to no avail. If the links among large-scale poverty among farmers, poppy cultivation, the narcotics trade, corruption and terrorists are not severed, all our efforts, including the money spent, to consolidate peace, democratic institutions, reconstruction, stability, economic growth and social development in Afghanistan will continue to be undermined.

The people and the Government of Afghanistan have made remarkable progress and are determined to overcome the remaining challenges, however daunting they might be. The further engagement of the United Nations and the contributions of individual countries, as well as those of non-governmental organizations, are needed in order to meet the clear benchmarks set out in the Afghanistan Compact for the new five-year Afghan development phase.

In this respect, we welcome the Secretary-General's proposal for the continued presence of the United Nations in Afghanistan through assigning new tasks to UNAMA, in accordance with the coordination and monitoring role of the United Nations, in implementing the provisions of the Afghanistan Compact regarding security, governance, the rule of law and human rights, economic and social

development, as well as the cross-cutting issue of counter-narcotics.

Greece supports the new mandate and structure of UNAMA proposed by the Secretary-General and is ready to participate constructively in consultations on a draft resolution of the Security Council.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my country's commitment to continuing its political, military, economic and humanitarian involvement in Afghanistan. Let me just mention that, at the London Conference, Greece pledged $5 million in development projects. In parallel, we have undertaken the restoration of the Museum of Kabul as an indication of our commitment to the preservation of the unique Afghan cultural heritage.

Afghanistan and its people deserve a peaceful and prosperous future, and they have our full support on the long road ahead.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): First, I would like to thank Mr. Tom Koenigs for his very informative briefing. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has been making an indispensable contribution to consolidating peace and promoting reconstruction and development in that country. We also commend the UNAMA staff for their dedication, and we expect that, under Mr. Koenigs' leadership, UNAMA will continue its good work.

The Bonn process was completed successfully. The London Conference at the end of January, with the launching of the Afghanistan Compact, was a significant event in the laying out of a post-Bonn framework for continued international commitment and assistance for the country.

The fact is, however, that many challenges continue to face Afghanistan's future, including in the areas of security, governance, economic and social development, and — especially worrying — that of illicit narcotics. To meet those challenges, determined efforts are needed on the part of the Afghan Government, supported by continuous assistance from the international community. Japan appreciates the commitment shown by the Government of Afghanistan in vigorously pursuing its national objectives in these critical areas, such as through the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS). For the next phase of national reconstruction and reconciliation to be a success, it is considered essential that single-minded efforts be made towards the implementation of I-ANDS and of the Compact, with full ownership of the process by Afghans themselves, assisted by well-coordinated international support from the United Nations and the donor community.

The Secretary-General has reported that the National Assembly is now engaging in active deliberations and debates on issues ranging from administration of the country to threats to its stability. We are encouraged by this positive development. We also look forward to the early confirmation of Cabinet ministers by the National Assembly. Through this process, we hope that Afghanistan will overcome the difficulties so often experienced in the early stages of establishing a democratic political system.

Among the problems that continue to plague the country and its people are those posed by the insecurity and lawlessness that prevail in many provinces, as the Secretary-General's report has highlighted. To improve security, the size of the Afghan National Army and National Police must be expanded, their capabilities improved and judicial reform achieved without delay. At the same time, it is important to call on all Afghan parties and groups to exercise restraint and avoid resorting to violence, and all should engage in the conduct of political affairs in a peaceful manner and strive for national reconciliation.

Considerable progress has, in fact, been made by the Afghan Government and the international community in achieving reform throughout the security sector. Japan has been a major contributor to the promotion of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). We appreciate the efforts of the Afghan Government to bring disarmament and demobilization to a conclusion. With disarmament and demobilization having been completed, it now remains to work on completing reintegration, and we hope that this will be done at the earliest possible date.

With DDR almost achieved, Japan attaches special importance to the disbandment of illegal armed groups programme as an urgent item on our current agenda. This is an Afghan-led programme and, as such, it must be carried out by all the Government authorities concerned, acting together. We strongly hope that the Government will show the necessary resolve and commitment to make the programme yet another success. This, of course, requires international support for weapons collection and the collection of

information. In that connection, I am pleased to announce that Japan is planning to hold an international conference in Tokyo later this year on DDR and the disbandment of illegal armed groups. We call on the donor community to lend its valuable support to this vital project, which is directly related to improving security on a sustainable basis.

As for the question of the extension of the mandate of UNAMA, Japan supports the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, taking into consideration the launch of the Compact. Nevertheless, the "light footprint" approach should be maintained, in view of the need to encourage ownership on the part of the Afghan Government. Also, a scrap-and-build approach should be considered, where necessary, in deciding on the optimal allocation of personnel and funding resources.

We believe that, as Afghanistan moves into a new phase of its post-Bonn reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts, a Security Council mission should make a visit to Afghanistan to appraise the situation and demonstrate the continued commitment of the international community to providing assistance during this phase. In our view, such a mission could be organized soon after the UNAMA mandate is extended. It should be small and mobile, considering the prevailing security situation.

In conclusion, Japan is now working on a draft resolution on the extension of the UNAMA mandate. We hope to be able to present such a draft resolution for adoption by 23 March, taking into consideration the views expressed in this meeting by both members and non-members of the Security Council.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): I thank Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary- General, for having presented the report on the situation in Afghanistan. Let me at the outset take this opportunity to pay tribute to and thank the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Afghanistan's neighbours, and donor countries for their collective efforts in accompanying Afghanistan on its path to becoming a vibrant and stable member of the international community. The Afghan Compact is a welcome new framework for partnership between Afghanistan and the international community.

In the last four years, Afghanistan has made significant progress towards building a democratic State with accountable institutions. Progress has also been registered in the rehabilitation of the basic infrastructure required to support economic and social development.

The most urgent needs, which require ongoing attention, include the strengthening of Government structures; enforcing the basics of good governance, justice and the rule of law; upholding human rights; disarming and disbanding illegal armed groups; continuing with efforts to reduce the production and trafficking of narcotics; and laying the foundation for sustainable economic and social development. Similar attention also needs to be directed at strengthening the justice system, which lacks qualified personnel and the infrastructure to administer justice fairly and effectively. It is equally important that the leadership should also address social issues such as housing, the continuing empowerment of women, and the reintegration of returnees from neighbouring countries.

It is clear that a persistent challenge remains in the area of security, as suicide bombings continue, using increasingly sophisticated methods. The situation demands enhanced training and a well-equipped National Police with the capacity to project itself beyond Kabul and effectively cover the whole country. That should go hand in hand with the building of a fully operational Afghan National Army whose immediate assignment would be to disband illegal armed groups and terrorist structures.

We urge all those involved in violence to stop their illegal and criminal activities and instead to join in the task of restoring security and development to the Afghan people.

We believe that the Government and the people must lead and own the process. However, they need support from the international community, as was demonstrated by the recent launching of the Afghanistan Compact in London, which promises progress and stability for the still-fragile institutions built on the foundations of the Bonn process. We commend all those involved in the preparation and launching of the Compact. That creative and timely initiative was aimed at sustaining international attention and support so as to ensure that Afghanistan post-conflict institutions are sustained and that the country does not slide back into a crisis.

With international support, Afghanistan can now embark on the next stage of State consolidation. UNAMA has successfully completed its task with respect to the Bonn Agreement, but it continues to have an important role to play in Afghanistan. We support the extension of its adjusted mandate to enable it to continue to play a supportive role with respect to the Afghan people and Government in the implementation of the new Afghanistan Compact.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to thank Mr. Koenigs for his briefing. I should like to take this opportunity also to wish him every success in the very important mission he will be undertaking. On a personal note, let me say that we are particularly pleased that a United Nations official from Germany is following in the footsteps of a United Nations official from France.

I shall not present an analysis of the situation, which was very clearly set out by the new Special Representative. However, I would like to say that the situation is marked by a dual paradox. The first is that, while there has been considerable progress in Afghanistan on all fronts, there continues to exist, as previous speakers have underscored, a risk of destabilization that cannot be discounted given an upsurge in the level of insecurity. That has both internal and external causes and is manifested in acts of terrorism. But it is also fuelled by and rooted in other disturbing trends: the presence of armed groups, the drug-trafficking networks and, admittedly, to a certain extent, the weakness of the administration. The first paradox therefore entails not only the risk of destabilization, but also a risk that international assistance will be impeded.

As for the second paradox, I believe that a sign of our collective success — and, in particular, the success of the people and the Government of Afghanistan — is that matters are now in the hands of representative, freely elected and, I might add, capable Afghan institutions. However, we must continue to shoulder the responsibility of a presence in and assistance to Afghanistan. As we all know, the merit and success of the London Conference was the definition of a new contract between the international community and Afghanistan, adapted to the new context in which the Afghans are now managing their affairs.

For my part, I would recall that a major focus of the Afghanistan Compact is the development of the country's institutions, including local institutions. That is, we must strengthen the institutions and ensure robust decentralization. That is an enormous challenge, and we believe that the United Nations has a role to play in this area.

That brings me to the Secretary-General's proposals. I believe that, among the proposals before us and the tasks that the Special Representative has set for himself, there are a certain number that are of particular importance for us.

The first is the coordination of international efforts. I know that that has already been done. But, given the new context, we must find formulas that permit greater effectiveness in the coordination of international efforts, and only the Special Representative can do that. I am aware that, in that respect he is working on the establishment of the mechanism set out at the London Conference.

Secondly, I believe that the United Nations must intensify the efforts whose added value has been obvious in recent years. That is true, for example, with the disarmament of illegal armed groups. It is true with the preparation of future elections — an area in which the Special Representative has unique experience.

Thirdly, my delegation agrees that the role of the United Nations Mission must be extended to the provinces. Clearly, conditions must permit that, it must be done cautiously. But, at the same time, we believe that it is an inevitable operational consequence of the focus, set out in London, on institution-building, including in the provinces.

Fourthly, I am almost embarrassed to recall this, but I must: the regional dimension remains key. We have all recently seen, on television, very disturbing elements concerning the relations between Afghan authorities and certain neighbouring countries. We must all make a collective effort to help restore normal cooperation. Here also, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan clearly has a particular role to play to establish an atmosphere of trust between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Like previous speakers, I am obliged to say a few words about our contribution at the national level. With regard to civilian assistance, we have taken decisions to significantly increase our commitments for the years ahead. For example, we will devote €33 million to rural development and to support for developing the

private sector. In particular, as I already had the opportunity to say to my colleagues, we will increase our security contribution. We will take over the command of Kabul province within the International Security Assistance Force for an eight-month period, beginning this summer. At that time, we will increase our contingent to more than 1,000 men. We will also continue to step up our support for the training of the Afghan National Army, particularly by deploying 100 officers in National Army training teams.

Indeed, within the framework of the new Compact, the relationship between Afghanistan and the international community should not involve only international institutions; there must be a strong presence of international institutions, but that does not relieve us of our responsibilities at the national level. I wish to assure members that France will be present to meet the challenge.

Mr. Faaborg-Andersen (Denmark): Let me join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2006/145), which focuses on key areas in the remarkable transformation that the Afghan people and Government are undertaking with the assistance of the United Nations. Also, a very warm welcome to Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We thank him for his frank and comprehensive assessment of Afghanistan's successes, the challenges ahead and the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in facilitating progress in this very complex environment.

Before proceeding any further, I should like to fully associate Denmark with the statement to be delivered later in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, I would like to stress that Denmark fully supports the Afghanistan Compact. In order to support the implementation of the Compact, Denmark has made a long-term, fully financed pledge of more than $100 million for development efforts in Afghanistan and has decided to substantially increase the Danish military presence, with the majority of troops placed in the troubled southern Helmand province.

At the London Conference, the United Nations was given a key role in facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We agree that there is a need to extend UNAMA's mandate for another 12 months, and we support the broad outline of UNAMA's main tasks and priorities, set out by the Secretary-General in his report, as they flow from the Compact.

I have six comments or questions on the role, responsibilities and institutional set-up of UNAMA, to which I would like to turn now.

First, we very much agree that reinforcing the new and fragile democratic institutions provided through the Bonn process is a major task for UNAMA. The scope for failure is abundant, and the need for the good offices of and concerted action by UNAMA cannot be overemphasized. We urge the Special Representative to continue an active dialogue with the entire political spectrum as well as with the President and Government in order to keep the positive development in the political processes on track.

Secondly, promoting human rights should, in our view, continue to be a high-priority task for UNAMA. It includes improving the situation of women and promoting women's rights. This entails UNAMA support for the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and for the National Action Plan for Women, and it implies that UNAMA should insist that the President appoint qualified judges to the Supreme Court — judges who have the full implementation of the constitution at heart.

Thirdly, reform of the public sector, including the justice sector, is indispensable if the Afghans are to enjoy transparency, accountability and the rule of law. This is also the only way for the new democratic institutions to transform their good intentions and decisions into tangible improvements for the country as a whole. Add to this that public-sector reform can and should have a major impact in reducing corruption, combating drugs and creating an environment conducive to legal economic activities. UNAMA should make active use of its leading role in the United Nations family in Afghanistan to press for concerted action in this field, in full coordination with the international donor community.

Fourthly, UNAMA's presence outside Kabul must be significantly enhanced, as Mr. Koenigs has already pointed out. From our perspective, to a great extent the key to the Compact's success rests on progress in the provinces. A strong UNAMA presence provides enhanced coordination, information flows, trust and

impetus from all parties — the population, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, the international aid community, Governments, etc. — to the efforts to improve security, governance and development. The Secretary-General touches upon this in his report, and I would appreciate it if the Special Representative would elaborate on his plans in this regard.

Fifthly, UNAMA has chosen to maintain the split of its activities into two pillars — Pillar I, dealing with political affairs, and Pillar II, with relief, recovery and development, including cross-cutting issues. This split entails unavoidable overlaps. For example, human rights are part of Pillar I, while gender — which has clear rights aspects — is included in Pillar II. We understand that the split may be necessary from an institutional point of view. It does, however, give rise to coordination issues that need to be tackled head-on.

For our sixth and final point, we urge the United Nations to prioritize timely recruitment of highly qualified staff for the positions with UNAMA in Afghanistan, not least in the provinces, where vacancies at places with only one or two internationals can have and have had a detrimental effect.

Before concluding, let me turn to the worsening security situation, which continues to be of great concern. We urge countries in the region to do their utmost to assist the Afghan Government in stemming the tide of insurgents crossing the borders into Afghanistan, as well as in blocking financial flows to the Taliban and Al Qaida — flows that are, inter alia, used to buy the services of poor, illiterate farmers to kill mullahs, school teachers, Government security personnel and soldiers from countries assisting in the stabilization of Afghanistan.

We have seen many successes and have been through trying times in Afghanistan. But there is no doubt that the next 12 months will prove to be another test of our resolve — individually and collectively — to assist Afghanistan on its path to a stable, just and prosperous future.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes Mr. Tom Koenigs to the Security Council to give his first briefing to the Council in his capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. We congratulate him again on his assumption of this important post. China will continue to fully support him and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in their work.

Afghanistan has completed the political transition process stipulated in the Bonn Agreement and has taken preliminary steps to establish modern institutions of national authority. The national economy is maintaining a fairly rapid growth momentum, and there have been improvements in people's livelihoods. The reconfiguration and reform of the security sector is moving forward at a steady pace. The national army and national police have begun to assume greater responsibilities in maintaining national security. Afghanistan is actively seeking international and regional cooperation to create a favourable environment for national stability and development. These achievements would not have been possible without the assiduous efforts of the Afghan Government and people, the generous support of the international community and the hard work of UNAMA.

At the same time, the peace and reconstruction process in Afghanistan is still confronting a multitude of difficulties and challenges. The ability of the Afghan national institutions needs to be further strengthened. Economic and social development cannot yet meet the people's basic needs. The question of narcotics and the activities of extremists and terrorists remain a threat to the peace and stability of Afghanistan.

Against this backdrop the London Conference on Afghanistan signed the Afghanistan Compact and endorsed the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy submitted by the Afghan Government. It not only embodies the consensus and determination of the international community, but it also proposes specific measures and a pragmatic time frame for peace and the reconstruction of Afghanistan in the next five years. It also marks the beginning of a new phase in peace and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

In order to implement the Afghanistan Compact and consolidate the Bonn Process, the Afghan Government should first focus, on a priority basis, on stability and development and should complete basic reconstruction in the areas of administration, economy and the rule of law so that the Afghan people can better enjoy the dividends of peace and stability. Next, the United Nations should continue to play a central and coordinating role in the peace and reconstruction of Afghanistan and in international assistance. In this

connection, China endorses the Secretary-General's relevant recommendations and agrees to a one-year extension of UNAMA and adjustments to its mandate so that it can better accomplish the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

Thirdly, the international community should sustain its attention and input regarding Afghanistan and ensure timely delivery of pledged assistance. At the same time, it should also carefully heed and respect Afghanistan's concerns and proposals and encourage it to continue to enhance its sense of ownership and assume more responsibilities. Regional cooperation is an effective way for the international community and neighbouring countries to help Afghanistan achieve stability, development and integration with the international community. We hope that Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries will fully utilize existing mechanisms, deepen regional cooperation, enhance mutual political trust and seek joint development.

As a good neighbour of Afghanistan, China has always closely followed the peace and reconstruction process there. To ensure mutual benefit, win-win results and joint progress, we stand ready to scrupulously implement the Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations, the Declaration on Counter-Narcotics, within the framework of the Kabul Declaration, and the Declaration on Encouraging Closer Cooperation in Trade, Border Crossing and Investment, and other major instruments. China is ready to honour the new pledges made at the international Conference on Afghanistan and to continue, as always, to provide long-term cooperation and support to Afghanistan.

Even though the road ahead may not be smooth, the Afghan people, who have gone through so many tribulations, cherish peace and stability and yearn for security and development. We have every reason to believe that, with the efforts of the Afghan Government and people and the support of the international community, Afghanistan will continue to achieve remarkable results in the new phase of its national reconstruction.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): I would like at the outset to thank Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing and observations. We wish him all the best in his demanding mission. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for peace and security. The report provides a clear and objective analysis of the current situation in Afghanistan, and we share the view of the Secretary-General on the progress made so far, as well as on the serious challenges that remain to be tackled.

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. That is why I will limit my statement to a few comments.

We believe that the launch of the Afghanistan Compact represents a genuine milestone in the Afghan reconstruction process, in which the United Nations has a central and impartial coordinating role. The Compact provides a solid framework for the next stage of the transition of Afghanistan with Afghan ownership and international support establishing the conditions in which the Afghan people can enjoy representative government and self-sustaining peace and development.

We agree that the tasks in all four key areas and the timelines for their implementation set out in the Compact are very demanding. At the same time, we are convinced that they are realistic and achievable, provided that both sides fulfil their commitments. It is necessary to make sure, however, that measures in all key areas — security, governance, development and eliminating the narcotics industry — are implemented in a coordinated manner and that meaningful progress is achieved in each of those areas. In this context, we welcome the decision to establish a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by a senior Afghan Government official and by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, with the purpose of ensuring coordination and coherence of the implementation of the Compact. In this connection, I would like to ask Mr. Koenigs to share with us a few more details on the composition of the Board and a prospective date when it will be fully operational.

Security remains essential for long-term reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. We note with satisfaction that progress has been achieved in security sector reform. However, we are concerned about the numerous recent acts of extremist violence and terrorism, which remind us that Afghanistan remains a very insecure place. The international community must provide all necessary assistance to the

Afghan people and Government to extend and exercise authority across the country and create the environment required to enable reconstruction and nation-building activities to continue.

In this regard, we welcome and commend the decision to strengthen the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and to expand the areas of its operation to the south and east of the country. We believe that ISAF will also provide crucial support and assistance in the security sector reform process, including the disarmament and demobilization of illegal armed groups.

Last but not least, we believe that the promotion of human rights, with special attention being paid to the rights of women and children, should be a very important cross-cutting priority in the process of transformation. In this regard, we agree with the Secretary-General that a measure of success in meeting Afghanistan challenges will also depend on the extent to which respect for human rights is institutionalized.

The United Nations has a vital role to play in supporting the Afghan Government. We attach the utmost importance to the work of the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and other agencies of the United Nations, and we believe that UNAMA should continue to play an important role in the foreseeable future. We support the extension of its adjusted mandate, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report, and we agree with Mr. Koenigs that, when we consider UNAMA's field expansion and presence in the provinces, special attention needs to be placed on security measures and resources for United Nations personnel.

Slovakia strongly supports the political and economic transition of Afghanistan. We will continue to contribute to the transformation and stabilization processes through maintaining our peacekeepers in the country and providing assistance to the Afghan police and army. Financial resources for official development assistance projects have been approved for 2006, and Afghanistan remains one of our priority countries.

Mr. Bolton (United States of America): I would like to join other delegations in thanking Mr. Koenigs for his briefing this morning and for the work that he and his team are doing. The United States is grateful for the hard work and sacrifice of the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We fully support the renewal of UNAMA's mandate and strongly urge other nations to do the same.

The remarkable transition in Afghanistan since 2001 has underscored the importance of UNAMA's contributions. Throughout the Bonn process, UNAMA contributed enormously to progress towards our shared goals in Afghanistan.

The recent London Conference marked the end of the Bonn process and the launching of the Afghanistan Compact — the new foundation for the international community's support for Afghanistan. The United Nations role in the formulation of the Compact and in guiding reconstruction, governance and development efforts in Afghanistan will be essential to ensuring success over the next five years. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan is co-chairing the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board created by the Compact, the United Nations responsibilities in Afghanistan will increase. We look to the Special Representative to use his role on the Board to maintain momentum in Afghan reconstruction, to improve the effectiveness of international reconstruction and assistance and to persuade donors and the Afghan Government to stay the course, as outlined in the Compact. United Nations support and resources are critical to making the Board an effective organization.

Our objective is to ensure strong leadership and levels of financial and technical assistance adequate to make progress throughout the country. A key measure of progress will be growth in Afghan capacity. Under the Compact, the Government of Afghanistan has committed itself over the next five years to meeting specific goals of improving security by fully developing the Afghan national army and the Afghan national police, providing good governance based on the rule of law and respect for human rights, promoting economic and social development and building a legal economy free from the corruption of drug production and trafficking.

We look forward to working with UNAMA to help Afghanistan reach the goals established in the Afghanistan Compact, the realization of which will benefit the broader region as well as Afghanistan. The support for the Afghanistan Compact demonstrates the international community's firm commitment to security, democracy and economic development in Afghanistan, while highlighting the continuing

requirement for a strong United Nations role through its leadership in many ongoing programmes.

The United States remains committed to Afghanistan for the long term. We look forward to working with UNAMA to improve security for Afghanistan, including the promotion of international human rights standards, with a reformed and fully capable Afghan police force and judicial system.

With UNAMA, we seek to help Afghanistan to develop its human capital through strengthened access to health care and education for women and men at all levels. Together with the people of Afghanistan, their democratically elected representatives and UNAMA, we look forward to creating a peaceful Afghan State that is a source of stability in the central South Asia region.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), namely, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

We express our appreciation to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tom Koenigs for the detailed briefing on the current situation in Afghanistan. We note with satisfaction that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continues to perform its important functions effectively.

The Afghanistan Compact, adopted by consensus at the London Conference, has showed that the international community is determined to continue to provide large-scale assistance to the Afghan people in the post-conflict rehabilitation of their country. It is important that in this new, post-Bonn stage the central role in coordinating international efforts on the Afghan track continues to belong to the United Nations.

As adopted, the Compact provides for clear time frames for the practical implementation by the Afghan Government — with international assistance — of large-scale tasks in the areas of security, governance, human rights, development and the fight against the drug threat in the coming five years. We expect that the Afghan authorities will act with full awareness of their broad responsibilities for those tasks.

The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board is meant to play a useful role in monitoring the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We expect that all the key players in Afghan affairs will be involved in the activities of the Board as permanent participants. That will contribute to effective coordination of international efforts in the post-war recovery and economic rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

To successfully implement the tasks set forth in London, it is necessary to radically alter the security situation, which has recently worsened. We are seriously concerned about the fact that the attacks of extremists from the Taliban and Al-Qaida are growing bolder and reaching into ever-larger territories. We support the broadened activities of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) authorized by Security Council. Further building the capacity of the national security forces would contribute to the speedy stabilization of the situation. That priority will ensure a stable security situation in Afghanistan in the future.

Given the increasing threat from the Taliban and Al-Qaida, strict compliance — including by the Afghan Government — with the sanctions imposed by the Security Council takes on special relevance. We share the view that the implementation of the national reconciliation programme is important for the long-term stabilization of the situation in the country. At the same time, that process should not contradict the decisions taken by the Security Council or the task of fully eradicating the terrorist threat from the territory of Afghanistan.

We note with concern that efforts by the international community and the Afghan authorities to counter the production and smuggling of drugs have not yet produced the desired results. Resolving that problem will be key in achieving success in the fight against terrorism in economic rehabilitation and in establishing stable central authority in Afghanistan. Only determined and coordinated steps by the international community and the Afghans themselves can truly put an end to the drug trafficking from Afghanistan by combining internal measures and tougher border controls and cutting off drug-trafficking channels, including through the involvement of neighbouring States. It is important that a comprehensive international strategy against the drug threat from Afghanistan be developed as soon as possible, with the participation of the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan.

As a part of the efforts to create anti-drug security belts along Afghanistan's borders, the CSTO member States carried out a two-stage preventive operation, named Operation Channel, from 25 to 31 October and from 5 to 12 December 2005, with invited observers from Azerbaijan, Iran, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and the Ukraine. That operation has become more effective every year. This time more than 11 tons of narcotics and psychotropic substances, including half a ton of heroin and more than a ton of hashish, were confiscated. In addition, 1,030 firearms and more that 37,000 rounds of ammunition were confiscated from offenders.

Afghanistan remains one of the priorities in the work of CSTO. A working group on Afghanistan was launched under the Organization's Council of Foreign Ministers. A proposal to establish cooperation using that format was sent to the Afghan side. We regard multifaceted cooperation between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries as an important factor in promoting a comprehensive settlement. In that regard, the programme of assistance to Afghanistan should embrace neighbouring countries, possibly including through placing orders in those countries from donor countries and international organizations.

The members of the CSTO are ready to continue to contribute to the process of regional interaction in key areas of international efforts in Afghanistan, including economic rehabilitation, security and the fight against drug trafficking.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Along with other speakers, I too would like to thank Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his very clear briefing.

The London Conference and the adoption of the Afghanistan Compact are without doubt very positive developments, as they organize the concerted efforts of Afghanistan and the international community on the basis of benchmarks and time frames in four areas, namely, security, the rule of law, development and — as an issue cutting across all those others — combating drug trafficking.

With regard to the security challenges, the most important goals of the Compact are to create Afghan armed forces numbering 74,000 troops by 2006, to disarm all illegal armed groups by 2007 and to almost fully eradicate opium cultivation by 2010.

With regard to the Compact's economic and social development goals — which, along with the security objectives, are perhaps the most important goals of the Compact — there is, among the other objectives, the desire to build national road and electricity networks by 2008. Above all, the Compact includes the goal of establishing irrigation systems between 2006 to 2010, so as to deal with the six-year drought from which Afghanistan has suffered, as well as to make it possible to find alternative crops to opium.

As I have said, all that is very positive. However, the Compact and the Government of Afghanistan face a paradoxical situation today, given the two fundamental challenges: insecurity and the trafficking in narcotic drugs. Each of those is capable of distorting every effort made by Afghans and their partners through the Compact to build a democratic and stable country.

Indeed, the Compact comes at a time of disturbing trends, such as a rise in terrorism, including more frequent suicide attacks on the Kabul authorities and more violence directed against the international forces and the educational system. Behind such attacks are insurgents and other anti-Government elements linked to terrorist groups, drug trafficking and organized crime.

However, the increase in violence by illegal armed groups or terrorists is not our sole concern. Drug trafficking continues to be a reality linked to those phenomena and its scale overshadows the political progress achieved to date. Despite efforts to establish a viable rule of law, many international analysts are venturing to assert that Afghanistan is today the best-organized drug State in the world. The Secretary-General's report states that 87 per cent of the world's opium is produced in Afghanistan and that 50 per cent of that country's gross domestic revenues are derived from drugs. Two million people are employed in that sector, transforming rural life in Afghanistan, forging alliances with terrorism, the Taliban and other warlords, and making their presence felt in the nascent Afghan political institutions.

It is vital for the opium growers to find alternative crops. Rural agriculture must be addressed as a priority and efforts to counteract six years of drought in Afghanistan must be undertaken, but drastic measures must also be taken to punish drug traffickers. If we do not wage a resolute battle to ensure that

opium-growing is essentially eradicated by 2010, our ongoing concerns will be justified. The international media are increasingly describing Afghanistan as a major exporter of heroin, in spite of the presence of international forces and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Unfortunately, that is all true and it tends to undermine national and international efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. I say this because Afghanistan's accommodation with heroin is beginning to affect the legitimacy of efforts to combat drug trafficking in the Andean region and Latin America, and may do so throughout the world in the future. As in other cases before the Security Council, we must bear in mind the fact that democracy, the rule of law and citizenship cannot be established without a viable national economy that is not sustained by drug trafficking.

That is why, if the Afghanistan Compact is to achieve democracy and security for that country's citizens, a viable Afghan national economy must be established free of connections to the export of heroin and opium. If Afghanistan's economy remains addicted to heroin exports, the Compact will not work and Afghanistan will again be threatened with collapse as an ungovernable entity in the future. That would besmirch the name of democracy around the world, because democracy and heroin are incompatible.

As regards the proposed mandate for UNAMA, my delegation notes that the issue of drug trafficking is barely addressed. There may be reasons for that, but my delegation should like to suggest that it would be desirable for UNAMA to adopt the approach taken in the London Compact to prioritize support for combating drug trafficking as a cross-cutting issue in the various areas covered by its mandate.

Mr. Thomson (United Kingdom): I want to begin by joining the Secretary-General in the tribute contained in his report to the work of Jean Arnault and warmly to welcome Tom Koenigs to the job. I personally, and my delegation and Government, look forward to working with him very closely.

I associate myself with the statement to be made by the representative of Austria later in this debate on behalf of the European Union and I want to say right at the outset that the United Kingdom fully supports the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for another year, including the adjustments to the mandate proposed by the Secretary-General.

Under the Bonn process, Afghanistan made really tremendous progress, as the Secretary-General's report highlights, but as that report also indicates, more remains to be done — inevitably, since this is a long-term task that is going to require sustained international commitment.

The London Conference in late January provided an opportunity for the international community to re-emphasize its commitment to Afghanistan for the next phase. The United Kingdom was proud to host the Conference and was grateful to the United Nations, and the Secretary-General in particular, for their support.

The Afghanistan Compact agreed at the Conference demonstrates the international community's firm continuing support for Afghanistan's reconstruction and also, and importantly, for increasing Afghan ownership of the process. The Compact aims to encourage and address Afghanistan's development over the next five years, with a clear set of benchmarks and goals designed to deliver reform on the ground and to show the people of Afghanistan the fruits of international cooperation. The $10.5 billion pledged at the London Conference provided encouraging evidence that the international community remains determined to underpin its political support with the practical assistance needed to achieve the Compact's ambitious goals.

We welcome the solidity of that international support for the Government and people of Afghanistan in their courageous commitment to an open society and the support that the Conference reflected for UNAMA's mission, but we do have to move quickly to maintain the momentum of the London Conference. We welcome the United Nations commitment, repeated this morning by Tom Koenigs, to playing a leading role in coordinating efforts to deliver the Compact. The United Kingdom supports the early establishment of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to drive forward the ambitious Compact agenda.

I want to highlight just two of the numerous challenges which lie ahead.

First, with regard to security, I want to begin by recognizing UNAMA's own security concerns. Of course, improving security remains critical to the entire enterprise, particularly in the South and the East. The

phased expansion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is a key part of that agenda, and the United Kingdom is proud to be playing its part, with Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Estonia and other partners, in enabling ISAF's third stage to role out in the South of the country. ISAF's core tasks do not, we believe, need to change as it expands into the South. Those tasks, of course, are helping to extend the authority of the central Government, facilitating security-sector reform and helping to create an environment in which Afghan governance and the rule of law, as well as development, can prosper.

The second challenge I want to highlight is the corrosive threat presented by the narcotics industry. Working to eliminate opium poppy cultivation, production and trafficking is absolutely vital to the long-term security, development and effective governance of Afghanistan.

None of us is under any illusion about the scale and complexity of this problem, but we do need to be clear that, unless we can provide effective support to President Karzai and his Government in their efforts to address this problem in a sustainable way, all that we and the Afghan Government and people are seeking to achieve risks being undermined.

This is a significant challenge, because sustainable drug-elimination strategies take time, particularly when the challenges are as severe as those in Afghanistan. There are no instant solutions; there are no shortcuts to success. The Afghan Government and its friends have a lot of work ahead; they, and we, are in this for the long haul.

But progress is being made. The year 2005 saw the passage of vital counter-narcotics legislation, the conviction of more than 90 traffickers, an increase in drugs-related seizures and a 21 per cent reduction in land under opium poppy cultivation.

However, the international community still needs to increase its support to help the Government of Afghanistan build on those successes and deliver on its long-term counter-narcotics goals.

My Government will be spending over 270 million pounds — that is, nearly half a billion dollars — over the next three financial years in support of the Government of Afghanistan's updated national drug control strategy. We have also helped the Government of Afghanistan to create a counter-narcotics trust fund to mobilize international donor support. That fund is central to building Afghan counter-narcotics capacity, planning and resource transparency, and we will channel over $50 million worth of counter-narcotics assistance through the fund over a three-year period.

The updated counter-narcotics strategy, which was presented at the London Conference, represents a more sophisticated approach to counter-narcotics. We believe that the focus on the four key priorities — targeting the trafficker, strengthening livelihoods, reducing demand and developing effective institutions — will help to make a greater impact on the trade. Finally, on counter-narcotics, the United Kingdom is also supporting the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics in its efforts to mainstream counter-narcotics activities within the Government of Afghanistan's overall national development strategy.

The drugs trade is not an isolated, self-contained problem. Tackling it will require substantial progress across the broader reconstruction effort. The inclusion of counter-narcotics as a cross-cutting theme in the Afghanistan Compact and in the Government of Afghanistan's Interim National Development Strategy recognizes the need for a broad-based approach to the problem.

The London Conference sent a clear signal that the international community will not desert Afghanistan; and, by extending UNAMA's mandate, we reinforce that message and underline the centrality of the role of the United Nations in this task.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, the initiative that you have taken to include this debate on our agenda gives us an opportunity to underscore the need for urgent international assistance for restoring peace and normalcy in Afghanistan and for rebuilding that country, devastated by war and terrorist acts, which we deeply deplore. My delegation appreciates the high quality of the report of the Secretary-General that was issued to this end, and we thank Mr. Tom Koenigs, his Special Representative, for having verbally presented it. Thus we have an overall view of developments in Afghanistan following the completion of the implementation of the Bonn Agreement, which marks the end of the political transition in that country.

The international community and the Security Council in particular have welcomed the positive

developments in the political process under way in Afghanistan. The legislative elections held in September 2005, which put in place an Afghan legislative council, following the election of the President of the republic, represent meaningful progress in the building of a democratic, peaceful, united and prosperous Afghanistan. This process was bolstered by the holding of the international London Conference on 31 January 2006, which launched the Afghanistan Compact, endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1659 (2006). Today, the international community pins great hopes on the implementation of the outcome of that Conference, which has provided the country with an Interim National Development Strategy, a true framework laying out policies and programmes for rebuilding the country over the next five years.

Indeed, the Afghanistan Compact, an ambitious plan directed by the Afghan Government itself, with the assistance of the international community, looks to be an appropriate response to the tremendous challenges facing that country. It gives priority to issues of security, the rule of law and governance, development and reconstruction, and to the thorny issue of drugs. It is encouraging that this plan includes benchmarks and well-defined time frames and goals to be achieved in terms of results. Indeed, the implementation of the Compact greatly depends on the generosity of Afghanistan's international partners and on the pledges made by participants in the London Conference, totalling more than $10.5 billion, which bodes well for this process.

This is an opportunity for my delegation to reaffirm, yet again, that the international community must demonstrate the same spirit of generosity with respect to countries involved in reconstruction efforts following armed conflicts. Similarly, my delegation believes that, from this standpoint, the key and impartial role of the United Nations must be reaffirmed in terms of coordinating efforts to implement the Compact. As such, we welcome the United Nations presence, through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), whose mandate expires on 24 March 2006 and is to be renewed for a further period of 12 months, in accordance with the Secretary-General's proposal. We appreciate the advisory role to be played by UNAMA in the strategic and political fields, working with the Afghan authorities and their international partners, in its role as co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. Similarly, it must provide assistance at the local level for people in Afghanistan, while taking into account threats to the security and safety of United Nations personnel. From that standpoint, it is necessary to give UNAMA additional and sufficient security-related resources, particularly by guaranteeing it air support in cases of medical emergency, for instance. As such, the role of UNAMA, which is already essential, will become even more pivotal, given the considerable challenges Afghanistan will face in the area of reconstruction and in terms of security.

The problem of security is a central issue in Afghanistan. The prevailing insecurity translates into near-daily acts of indiscriminate violence perpetrated by illegal armed groups, such as the Taliban or supporters of Al-Qaida, drug traffickers, extremists with sectarian motives, as well as large-scale banditry, and the list goes on. It is therefore urgent that, together, the Afghan Government — whose role is essential — and the international community, under the leadership of the United Nations, particularly of UNAMA, find solutions to security-related challenges by training and increasing the number of the National Army forces; carrying out disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations and disbanding illegal armed groups; taking over the training of the police; strengthening the judicial system; reducing poverty; and fighting resolutely to eradicate poppy cultivation and the corruption fuelled by money from the drug trade.

We emphasize, however, that addressing the issue of security in Afghanistan is a key element of the entire process. Therefore, any development effort would be profoundly undermined if the central issue of security is not appropriately addressed.

In conclusion, my delegation pays tribute to the courage and self-sacrifice of the international personnel in Afghanistan, including those of the International Security Assistance Force, for the remarkable work accomplished in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. We believe that this Security Council debate amply shows the need for the presence and solidarity that should be clearly demonstrated by the international community in Afghanistan and for the sake of the Afghan people.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to welcome Mr. Tom Koenigs,

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and to thank him for his presence among us and for his briefing to the Council. I wish him every success in his mission.

The international community has made much progress towards the political and economic stabilization of Afghanistan and in the area of security. To date, that process has gone through several important phases, beginning with the Berlin Declaration of 1 April 2004 — the cornerstone of the process — and then the London Conference on Afghanistan, held in January, resulting in the Afghanistan Compact. The Compact provides a framework for action aimed at effective coordination and cooperation between the international community and the Afghan Government over the next five years in order to continue the rebuilding of Afghanistan and the consolidation of peace in the country with the support of international donors.

Qatar reaffirms its position of principle, which is based on the need to work to establish stability in Afghanistan while guaranteeing its national unity and full sovereignty. Qatar also reaffirms its support for the Afghan people and their readiness to work together with the international community to attain those objectives.

Thus, on 28 February 2006, Qatar hosted the Second Doha Conference on Border Management in Afghanistan, in collaboration with the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Conference concluded with the adoption of the Doha Declaration on Border Management in Afghanistan. However, because the Declaration was adopted after the drafting of the Secretary-General's report, the report does not mention that international Conference, which saw the participation of 26 countries, in addition to the United Nations, the European Union, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, NATO and neighbouring countries. The Conference sought to strengthen the cooperation among the countries of the region to establish police services and manage border security, while supporting Afghanistan in its fight against narcotics, including by strengthening border controls and the monitoring of roads leading to crossing points.

The Doha Declaration welcomes the measures taken to strengthen and deepen the cooperation among the region's countries through the signing of memorandums of understanding among Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and China with the support of the international community.

While it is true that tangible progress has been made in Afghanistan in the area of the practice of democracy and respect for human rights, there are still a number of deficiencies that must be addressed carefully. For example, in his report (S/2006/145), the Secretary-General takes note of the deplorable situation of the prison system, whose structure requires thorough reform and control of human rights violations.

The next phase in peacebuilding in Afghanistan will require a greater focus on economic development, on rebuilding and rehabilitating the infrastructure and on reducing poppy cultivation. In fact, narcotics smuggling has grown alarmingly in recent years: more than 85 per cent of the global poppy production comes from in Afghanistan. According to statistics, that production has increased further since the beginning of the year.

Therefore, we must do our utmost to reduce and eliminate drug smuggling and poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, without overlooking the need to improve health care and education services. Those are also crucial factors for preserving security and stability in Afghanistan.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has played a significant role in safeguarding stability and establishing an atmosphere conducive to economic stability and security in order to help the Afghan people develop successfully. UNAMA continues to play a central role in that regard. Therefore, we believe that the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report are extremely useful and should increase UNAMA's effectiveness in carrying out its mandate. We thus favour extending UNAMA's mandate for a 12-month period.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing.

Last month, my delegation joined other members of the Security Council in hailing the Afghanistan Compact, which built upon the Bonn Agreement as a model of peacebuilding for fragmented societies emerging from internecine conflict. We have noted that the Compact is an ambitious five-year programme built

on four pillars — namely, governance, security, counter-narcotics efforts, reconstruction and development — which will need our support to be implemented. Clearly, when the international community is united in mind and purpose, there is hardly any challenge that we cannot meet, including working together to prevent the outbreak of such costly and energy-sapping conflicts.

The latest report submitted by the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2006/145) highlights the tremendous progress that has been made in laying the foundation for a functioning democratic State based on tolerance, the rule of law and respect for human rights, all underpinned by a vibrant economy.

We note, at the same time, that progress has been rather slow in tackling the huge and interrelated problems of governance and security. In particular, my delegation deplores the wanton killings resulting from reckless acts of terror by remnants of extremist groups such as the Taliban and Al-Qaida and other armed bandits bent on undermining progress towards peace and stability in Afghanistan. It is, indeed, worrisome to note that the operational tempo and tactical sophistication of the insurgents and other anti-Government elements have continued to develop, and that now the four principal threats are improvised explosive devices, suicide bombings, kidnapping and attacks on the education system.

Nonetheless, we are confident that the coalition forces and the Afghan security forces will succeed in suppressing the elements engaged in destabilizing the country. We take this opportunity to call on the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan to iron out whatever differences they have and to cooperate in improving security along their common border to their mutual benefit.

In the same vein, we wish to underscore the grave dangers posed to the reconstruction process by the opium trade, which reportedly accounts for over 50 per cent of Afghanistan's gross domestic revenues and appears to be the lifeblood of criminal gangs and illegal armed groups. We urge the Afghan Ministry of Counter-Narcotics to redouble its efforts to end the role of Afghanistan as the world's largest supplier of opium, to say nothing of the fate of the large number of Afghans who are habitual drug users.

In this regard, we welcome the positive role of the coalition forces and the steady progress being made by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, to extend their control beyond Kabul. Needless to say, the vision of the Afghan Compact can be realized only in a safe and secure environment. My delegation wishes, therefore, to salute those countries that have been at the forefront of the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, notably the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan and several others, as well as, of course, UNAMA, United Nations agencies and various non-governmental organizations.

Another area of great concern is the human rights situation. As stated in the report, this is mainly attributable to the fragile security situation and weaknesses in governance. It is disheartening to note that women in Afghanistan continue to face serious restrictions in the exercise of their rights, including those that affect their freedom of movement and access to education, as well as widespread discrimination and pervasive violence, which also affect young girls. Worse still, justice is beyond the reach of most Afghan women.

Unless impunity is checked, factional commanders, officials of the security agencies and former warlords will continue to make arbitrary arrests and engage in illegal detention and torture without being held accountable. That is why it is imperative that the adoption of the national Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation be accorded the highest priority and that the Plan be vigorously implemented so as to minimize human rights abuses.

Given the nature of the challenges that Afghanistan currently faces, Ghana supports the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report aimed at consolidating and tightening up the activities of the United Nations agencies under the umbrella of UNAMA.

In March 2002, when UNAMA was established by Security Council resolution 1401 (2002), its mandate focused mainly on the promotion of national reconciliation and reconstruction, as well as on humanitarian relief within the framework of the Bonn Agreement. While the objectives of the Bonn process have largely been achieved, the fact is that formidable challenges remain, particularly with the adoption of the Afghanistan Compact.

It is obvious, therefore, that UNAMA has to be realigned in terms of its mandate and structure so as to enhance its ability to meet the new challenges. We therefore support the Secretary-General's request for an extension of the mandate of UNAMA for a further period of 12 months to enable it continue to provide political and strategic guidance to the Afghan leadership and its international partners as they embark on the ambitious and vital next phase of State-building.

Having come thus far, it is important for us to work together in ensuring that the fount of goodwill that has sustained Afghanistan since the Bonn process was launched continues to flow uninterrupted.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should now like to make a statement on behalf of Argentina.

First of all, I would like to join the other members of the Security Council in thanking Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, for his excellent and comprehensive briefing.

Argentina concurs with the main conclusions and observations in the Secretary-General's report, especially as regards the achievements in Afghanistan during the past four years and the numerous challenges that lie ahead. We believe that in order to consolidate the institutions established by the Bonn process and to continue to normalize the situation in the country, the continuous assistance of the international community is needed in several areas. The Afghanistan Compact, signed in London, clearly identifies the various aspects of that ambitious peacebuilding agenda for the next five years, especially in the areas of security; governance; the rule of law and human rights; economic and social development; and combating narcotics. Even though the Afghan Government and the Afghan people themselves must take the leadership in all of those fields, the international community also has an important role to play.

I would like take this opportunity to briefly refer to five issues.

The first is the security situation, which continues to be a cause for great concern. The south and south-east of Afghanistan continue to be the scene of a large number of violent incidents, and the fact that armed groups are using increasingly sophisticated methods is a particular cause for concern. The finalization of the political process does not seem to have had the positive impact in the security area for which all of us were hoping. Given that the Afghan forces are not yet in a position to deal with that challenge, we believe that the international community must continue to provide assistance in the security area. We therefore welcome the adoption by NATO of a new operational plan that would also cover the south of the country.

In our view, a second main challenge is combating narcotics. The Afghan economy continues to be dominated by the production of and traffic in opium, which accounts for 50 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. Thus far, the efforts undertaken have yielded only modest results, especially as regards the eradication of poppy cultivation. We therefore support the adoption of an integrated strategy, such as that presented in London. We should not lose sight of the fact that adopting laws and presenting plans is not sufficient in itself; the key lies in their implementation. The Afghan Government must take decisive leadership on this issue, and the international community must continue to provide assistance.

The third issue is the human rights situation, which is also a cause for concern. We believe that impunity for certain leaders of armed groups accused of grave human rights violations — some of whom have been elected to the Wolesi Jirga and hold public office — is unacceptable. We would like to request the Secretariat to provide us, in the near future, with more detailed information about the national Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation adopted in December. We hope that the search for reconciliation, important though it is, will not be carried out at the expense of justice, and that impunity will not ultimately prevail.

The fourth issue is the fight against terrorism linked to Al-Qaida and the Taliban. In my capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), I should like to reaffirm our readiness to assist the Government of Afghanistan in all aspects of the implementation of the sanctions regime established by the Security Council with a view to being able to apply the Committee's established procedures so as to resolve anomalous situations that, in the view of the Government of Afghanistan, have arisen with regard to people included on the Committee's list.

Lastly, with regard to the future presence of the United Nations in Afghanistan, generally speaking and as I stated earlier, my delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General. We agree that UNAMA's mandate should be extended for 12 months, with some adjustments, with the aim of assisting the Afghan people and Government in the next phase of the peacebuilding process. With that goal in mind, we shall once again participate constructively in the negotiations that will take place in the Security Council in the coming days.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

Before proceeding, I should like to say that, in an effort to optimize the use of our time and allow as many delegations as possible to take the floor, I shall not individually invite speakers to take seats at the table or to resume their seats at the side of the Chamber. When a speaker is taking the floor, the Conference Officer will escort the next speaker on the list to the table. I thank participants for their understanding and cooperation.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Afghanistan, on whom I now call.

Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan): At the outset, I should like to congratulate, you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. I very much appreciate your personal knowledge of the Afghan situation. I also wish to pay tribute to Ambassador John Bolton of the United States, your predecessor, for the excellent manner in which he led the work of the Council during the month of February.

The Afghan delegation wishes to join previous speakers in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, on his first briefing to the Council since he assumed leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We also commend the Special Representative for his comprehensive briefing on recent developments pertaining to the situation in Afghanistan. We wish him continued success in carrying out his duties.

Just over a month ago, representatives of more than 75 countries and international organizations gathered in London to convene the international Conference on Afghanistan, at which the international community and the Government of Afghanistan agreed on a new form of engagement beyond the Bonn process. In adopting the Afghanistan Compact, Afghanistan and its international partners renewed their commitments to achieve sustainable progress in key areas of security; governance; the rule of law and human rights; and social and economic development. Afghanistan is grateful to the international community for having pledged, in London, financial assistance amounting to $10.5 billion for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. The generosity displayed by the international community in London is a clear indication of the international community's sustained commitment to the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

With the presentation of the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy at the London Conference, the Government of Afghanistan has provided a clear and comprehensive blueprint for the implementation of the Compact. For its part, the Government of Afghanistan stands ready to fulfil its responsibility towards achieving the objectives of the Afghan National Development Strategy. In that respect, I am pleased to inform the Council that the Afghan Government recently appointed the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Justice, Finance and Economy, as well as the National Security Adviser, to serve on the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). The Board's work will be conducted under the chairmanship of Professor Ishaq Nadiri, senior economic adviser to President Karzai.

Afghanistan continues to make significant progress towards the establishment and consolidation of its State institutions. Allow me to briefly refer to some of the positive developments that have transpired since the Council's previous open debate on the situation in Afghanistan, which took place on 23 August 2005.

Perhaps the most significant development has been the formation of Afghanistan's National Assembly and provincial councils. Subsequent to the inauguration of both houses of parliament, representatives elected their respective chairmen and adopted the rules of procedure for the Assembly. Women hold 27 per cent of the 249 seats allocated to the people's house. Furthermore, 121 women were elected to provincial councils. Both branches of the legislative body are now operational and have engaged

in lively debates on issues relating to national security and to the political, economic and social development of the country. In accordance with a constitutional provision, the people's house of the National Assembly is now preparing to cast a vote of confidence on the Cabinet.

The Afghan Government continues to make progress in enhancing the capacity of the security institutions. The Afghan national army and national police are engaged in joint combat operations with international forces to secure peace, stability and public order. Having successfully concluded the disarmament and demobilization process, the Afghan Government remains committed to achieve the final phase of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process of former combatants. In addition, considerable progress has been made with regard to the disbandment of illegal armed groups.

Despite the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement, much remains to be accomplished in order to overcome the remaining challenges confronting Afghanistan.

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan remains concerned about the ongoing terrorist activities of the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremists groups, particularly in the south and south-east of the country. Such attacks not only terrorize the Afghan people in their daily lives, but also jeopardize the noble task of achieving the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. In that context, I would like to refer to the previous report of the Secretary-General, dated 12 August 2005, in which he stated:

> "It is time for the security situation to be addressed resolutely ... The insurgency's sources of funding, training and safe havens must also be effectively addressed" (*S/2005/525, para. 82*).

We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General has once again reiterated that assessment in paragraph 66 of his recent report.

The heinous suicide attack of 12 March 2006 on the life of Mr. Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, Chairman of the Upper House of the National Assembly, was yet another desperate attempt by the enemies of Afghanistan to destabilize the situation in the country. Mr. Mojededdi escaped from the attack, but let me seize this opportunity to state that the practice of suicide attacks has been virtually unknown in Afghan history. Even during the years of resistance against foreign occupations, the people of Afghanistan never resorted to that abhorrent practice. It is therefore evident that the phenomenon has come to Afghanistan from abroad. In that respect, allow me to also to state that such activities will not hinder the resolve of the Afghan people in their quest for a peaceful, stable and democratic Afghanistan.

The Afghan Government is of the conviction that the threat posed by extremist and obscurantist groups is not limited to Afghanistan. Rather, it remains a threat to the peace, prosperity and development of the region. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the fight against terrorism receive the sincere and honest commitment of all the countries in the region. We acknowledge the vital contribution of the international coalition forces and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in the effort to enhance the security situation in Afghanistan. In that context, we welcome the phased expansion of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force to the South and East of the country.

The cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs are yet another challenge facing Afghanistan. In that regard, the Afghan Government acknowledges the magnitude of that threat to the stability of the country and remains resolved to tackle the issue.

In recognition of our responsibility to eradicate the illicit cultivation and production of illicit drugs, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan presented its updated national drug control strategy at the London Conference on Afghanistan. The comprehensive strategy encompasses the following key pillars: the fight against drug trafficking, assistance to farmers through alternative livelihoods, drug demand reduction, and institution-building at the central and provincial levels.

Furthermore, the Afghan Government also adopted a new counter-narcotics law in December 2005, establishing the Central Narcotics Tribunal to prosecute drug traffickers and those associated with the production and cultivation of illicit drugs. In order to achieve the objectives of the national drug control strategy, we reiterate the need for the enhanced coordination and cooperation of the countries of the region and the international community with Afghanistan.

We have mentioned on numerous occasions before this Council and the General Assembly that high priority should be accorded to the social and economic development of Afghanistan. Progress in terms of social and economic development will have a direct impact on the overall security situation, given the interconnection between development and security.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that the continued support of the international community and the United Nations for Afghanistan is vital to the full implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We extend our appreciation and gratitude to all countries and international and regional organizations for the support rendered to Afghanistan. Finally, I would like to express the sincere appreciation of my delegation to Mr. Jean Arnault, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his dedicated service and contribution to the consolidation of peace, security and development in Afghanistan. We are also certain that Mr. Tom Koenigs will successfully and ably continue those endeavours.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Ms. Millar (Australia): Australia welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan of 7 March and supports the renewal of and proposed adjustments to the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA). That includes the continued political and good offices role for UNAMA in Afghanistan, such as its efforts to assist in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact agreed at the London Conference on Afghanistan, which the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr. Alexander Downer, attended. Australia also supports UNAMA's continued humanitarian and development coordination efforts.

The Afghanistan Compact, signed at the London Conference on Afghanistan held on 31 January and 1 February, provides a clear and agreed strategic framework for the next phase of reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. Australia applauds the completion of the process set out in the Bonn Agreement and welcomes the Compact's focus on Afghan leadership of the next phase, clear benchmarking of activities, and the ongoing political and financial support pledged by the international community at the Conference. That support includes Australia's latest commitment of up to $150 million over the next five years, which follows the $110 million Australia had committed since 2001 and which is now fully disbursed.

Australia remains concerned about the damage done in Afghanistan by years of conflict. We share the concern of the Secretary-General at the many issues that present challenges to the short- and longer-term stability and security of Afghanistan that have not yet been resolved. In his earlier reports to the Council, the Secretary-General expressed concern at the increasing trends in violence and challenges to State authority.

But alongside those worrying trends are outcomes of great promise. Significant among those are the Afghan National Assembly Lower House elections, held on 18 September 2005, in which some 6.4 million Afghans took part; the inauguration of the National Assembly on 19 December and the associated commencement of parliamentary debate and business; the agreement on 26 January between the Afghan Government and international partners on a national Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups strategy; the ongoing reform and rebuilding of the police and army; and the Afghan Government's counter-narcotics programme, the success of which will be crucial to longer-term stability and good governance.

Australia agrees with the Secretary-General that the human rights situation remains challenging and encourages the Afghan Government to continue its efforts in this area so as to meet domestic and international commitments fully.

Australia remains fully committed to playing its part in the efforts of the international community to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Alongside our further financial commitment of 150 million Australian dollars, Australia has also recently announced an additional military deployment of up to 200 personnel as a contribution to a provincial reconstruction team. This is in addition to our current Special Forces Task Group and aviation support element, which includes two CH-47 helicopters. In the context of today's debate, we are also proud to note that we provide direct support to UNAMA through the provision of an Australian Defence Force officer as a military adviser to UNAMA.

Australia will continue to support Afghanistan's transition from conflict to peace and democracy. We congratulate the United Nations on its efforts to date and agree that the proposed adjustments will allow

UNAMA, in providing support to the Government and people of Afghanistan, to meet better the challenges ahead.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and the countries aligning themselves with this statement.

Afghanistan has achieved considerable progress over the past four years in partnership with the international community. The political transition process, as set out in the Bonn Agreement, has been successfully completed with the inauguration of the Afghan National Assembly on 19 December 2005.

It is now vital to deepen and consolidate the progress achieved so far. With the major political State institutions now in place in the centre, it is important that those institutions extend their capacity to provide, in an efficient manner, security and essential public services to the population throughout the country.

Another milestone was the launching of the Afghanistan Compact at the London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January and 1 February 2006. The European Union welcomes the Afghanistan Compact on the basis of partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community, with a central and impartial coordinating role for the United Nations. The Compact is based on Afghan priorities and thus ensures Afghan ownership. This is in line with the European Union's longstanding support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an Afghanistan that is accountable to its citizens, able to assume its rightful place in the international community and to contribute to regional stability.

The European Union fully supports all three pillars of activity identified by the Compact: security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and sustainable economic and social development, as well as the cross-cutting priority of counter-narcotics.

We remain committed to long-term support for the efforts of the Afghan Government, and of the people of Afghanistan in each of these areas, and we will further enhance the effectiveness of our action. The EU-Afghanistan Joint Declaration of 16 November 2005 is a clear expression of this intent. Our assistance will be aimed mainly at fostering the establishment of a democratic, accountable and sustainable Afghan State — one capable of exercising its sovereignty and protecting the rights of its citizens, while stressing Afghan ownership in the process. We will build upon our already extensive engagement in the political, security, development and humanitarian fields, and we will ensure that counter-narcotics is mainstreamed throughout activities in each of these areas.

The challenges of the phase following the successful completion of the Bonn process call for deepening and consolidating the progress achieved so far. Counter-narcotics will remain a cross-cutting priority in our overall EU policy towards Afghanistan. We will sustain and increase our efforts in support of the priorities highlighted in the Government of Afghanistan's national drug control strategy. More specifically, we will support the development of strong and effective counter-narcotics institutions, law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, including through the provision of mentors and trainers, and will provide financial support for efforts by the Afghan Government to strengthen and diversify sustainable opportunities for leading rural livelihoods.

The human rights situation remains a cause for concern, in particular with regard to women and children. The EU will continue to give priority to this issue. We welcome the efforts put into drafting an interim national action plan for women in Afghanistan. This document will be a vital instrument to promote the participation of women and ensure their rightful place in Afghan public life.

In the context of continued efforts to end the culture of impunity and to promote reconciliation, the EU regards transnational justice as a crucial component. Equally important, we will continue to support the strengthening of a viable Afghan civil society as a way of consolidating democracy in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the European Union will pay special attention to governance and administrative reform and anti-corruption strategies, including at the provincial level, and to promoting human rights and the rule of law.

We will increase financial support for reform of the justice sector at both the central and provincial levels. In that regard, we will directly support provincial reconstruction team civilian activities, led by EU member States, which will include activities focused on the rule of law and good governance at the provincial level.

The security situation also remains a cause for concern and continues to undermine reconstruction efforts outside the cities. We will increase support for security sector reform, including by providing training and increased financial support for the creation of an effective and sustainable Afghan national police force, and by making available a further contribution to support the disarmament and reintegration of former combatants.

The European Union welcomes the Doha Declaration on Border Management in Afghanistan and the Declaration on Closer Cooperation on border police, both agreed in Doha on 28 February.

European Union member States continue to play their substantial role in supplying military and civilian resources to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.

The European Union will continue to support Afghanistan's sustainable economic and social development and its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We will provide assistance within the framework of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the Afghanistan Compact. Programmes and projects will be coordinated with the Afghan Government in order to ensure that they are consistent with its priorities and that donor activities are rationalized.

The EU will provide assistance directly through the budget and will continue to encourage the Afghan Government to reach greater financial self-sustainability.

I would like to conclude by stressing that the European Union looks forward to continued close cooperation with the rest of the international community, drawing on the Afghanistan Compact and the EU-Afghanistan Joint Declaration as frameworks for our cooperation. The European Union supports the continued central role of the United Nations, including in the monitoring and coordination of donor activities by the international community.

In that context, the European Union welcomes the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his latest report on Afghanistan (S/2006/145) regarding the future mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. UNAMA will thus continue the important role it has had in the past in the implementation of the Bonn Agreement. However, progress is dependent on long-term political commitment on the part of all stakeholders, both in Afghanistan and among members of the international community.

The European Union will continue to closely coordinate its actions and programmes with the United Nations, its agencies and other relevant international organizations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Iceland.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): I would like at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate and for giving us the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the situation in Afghanistan. I would also like to thank Mr. Koenigs for presenting the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/145).

We agree with those speakers who stated this morning that significant progress has been made towards building a democratic State in Afghanistan and towards the rehabilitation of the country's basic infrastructure. The signing of the Afghanistan Compact at the London Conference, held on 31 January and 1 February, marks an important milestone on the road towards the reconstruction and the normalcy of Afghanistan. It reaffirms the commitment of the Afghan Government and of the international community to collaborate in meeting the challenges of security, governance and economic and social development.

The report of the Secretary-General reminds us, however, of the challenges remaining in Afghanistan. Increased activity by insurgents and terrorists, who have used more sophisticated and lethal tactics, is of great concern. Understandably, much remains to be done as regards strengthening the rule of law, improving respect for human rights and the practice of good governance. The production and trafficking of and trade in illegal narcotics continue to be a threat to the success of State-building in Afghanistan. That is both a national and international concern, as it provides fertile ground for criminal networks, illegal armed groups and extremist elements. We commend the comprehensive efforts already carried out and new plans of the Afghan Government, of which my Afghan colleague spoke a few minutes ago. We also commend Afghanistan's international partners in the fight against drug cultivation and the drug trade.

With regard to human rights in Afghanistan, I would simply like to align myself with what my colleague from Austria said on behalf of the European Union on that subject. The interim National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan is an especially encouraging work in progress.

Peacekeeping missions enable a small country such as Iceland to join in international efforts for peace and development. We are currently contributing a mobile observation team to a provincial reconstruction team in western Afghanistan. Previously, Iceland was responsible for administrative command and other tasks at Kabul International Airport, beginning in mid-2004 and into 2005. It has now been decided that, beginning this spring, Iceland will again provide personnel in support of Kabul airport operations. At the request of the Afghan authorities and NATO, Iceland has also produced a plan for how to transition, in three to four years, the operation of the airport from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to Afghan civilian management. Iceland will assist in implementing the transition plan by providing expert advice and support, in close cooperation with other international organizations. Finally, on a number of occasions, since late 2001, Iceland has provided airlifts for the transport of peacekeeping forces, military equipment and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

Iceland continues to be committed to helping establish conditions in which Afghanistan can enjoy a representative Government and self-sustaining peace and security, as well as to the successful reconstruction of the country. Iceland fully supports the important work carried out to that end by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and by other international organizations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Germany.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): At the outset, let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on Afghanistan, prior to the revision and renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

As on previous occasions, I would like to take the floor today to make comments additional to the policy statement made by the presidency of the European Union, with which we fully align ourselves.

In addition, I would like to thank Jean Arnault for the work he carried out in his previous position and to welcome the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Tom Koenigs, who addressed the Security Council today for the first time in his capacity as head of UNAMA. We thank him for his comprehensive report and wish him every success in his work.

We would like to express our appreciation for the latest report of the Secretary-General on developments in Afghanistan and on the future work plans for the United Nations following the launching of the Afghanistan Compact in London earlier this year (S/2006/145).

The Compact is a solid and promising basis for Afghanistan and for the international community when we look at the challenges of the post-Bonn era until 2010. We are confident that progress will be achieved by consolidating Afghan institutions and by mastering the key challenges of security, good governance, the rule of law, economic and social development and — as a cross-cutting priority that has been mentioned by many previous speakers — the fight against the narcotics industry. The substantial pledges made at the London Conference demonstrated the readiness of the international community towards a long-term commitment in Afghanistan. In our view, rebuilding Afghanistan has been a successful example of what can be achieved through a coordinated and sustained multilateral approach. In that respect, the United Nations will continue to have a decisive role.

For Germany, Afghanistan will remain a priority in its worldwide engagement. Our bilateral financial commitment from 2002 until 2010 will amount to more than $1 billion. We are also prepared to relieve Afghanistan of old debts within the framework of the Paris Club.

We agree with the observations made in the Secretary-General's report, including those on the paramount importance of security. Therefore, Germany will remain strongly involved in the security sector through our lead role in police reform, through support for the disbandment of illegal armed groups by the provincial reconstruction teams under our responsibility, and by providing the largest military contingent to the International Security Assistance Force until Britain replaces us in that role.

Let me add that at the end of February, the Governments of Afghanistan and Germany jointly organized another major conference on police reform in Doha, generously hosted by the State of Qatar. The conference focused on police reform and border management in a regional perspective. We believe that a functioning police force in Afghanistan will have a key role in providing security, fighting crime and drug trafficking and protecting borders in cooperation with neighbouring States.

At Doha, Afghanistan and its neighbours created the basis for joint regional border management. Two declarations were adopted — the Doha Declaration on Border Management, which takes a regional approach, and the Declaration on Closer Cooperation on Border Police, within the framework of the Kabul Declaration and the reconstruction of the police of Afghanistan. In addition, pledges of up to $38 million were made available for police reform in Afghanistan. The Doha conference was a step towards meeting the relevant benchmark of the Compact.

The United Nations will continue to play a central role in Afghanistan, as of now on the basis of the Afghanistan Compact. We welcome this role and the functions and the structure of UNAMA outlined in the Secretary-General's report. We reiterate Germany's support for United Nations activities in Kabul, as well as throughout the country. We wish the United Nations and, in particular, UNAMA and Mr. Koenigs, success in their future work.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. Let me also extend our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan and for the untiring commitment and determination demonstrated by him and his colleagues to consolidate peace, stability and development in the country. I also wish to congratulate Mr. Tom Koenigs, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, thank him for his briefing and assure him of our continued support and cooperation in helping the people and the Government of Afghanistan to realize their long-awaited aspirations for peace, stability and development.

We have noted with delight that over the past few months the political transition envisaged under the Bonn Agreement has been completed through the election and inauguration of the Afghan National Assembly, and that a new phase in the history of Afghanistan has started with the Afghanistan Compact, launched at the London Conference in January this year. Indeed, the completion of the Bonn process, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, has resulted in significant political accomplishments and promising improvements in the economic and social fields. These include, in particular, continued progress in public administration and the national education system, as well as achievements in the financial and fiscal fields. The report of the Secretary-General depicts a promising future for Afghanistan, saying that, in a little over four years, Afghanistan has made significant progress towards becoming a democratic State with accountable institutions and towards reconstructing the basic infrastructure that can support the economic and social development of the country.

In this context, the Government of Afghanistan has taken the lead in developing the framework that will guide the social and economic development processes essential for consolidating the gains of the Bonn process. It has developed a report on the Millennium Development Goals and adapted the Millennium Development Goals to the Afghan context, while including a ninth goal on enhancing security. Indeed, the Afghanistan Compact, together with the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy, provide an important opportunity to ensure that the Government of Afghanistan and the international community work together on a common plan towards shared objectives in the fields of security, governance and development.

Despite those remarkable accomplishments, much remains to be done, and many issues that present challenges to the short- and longer-term security and stability of Afghanistan are yet to be addressed adequately and resolved. We concur with the Secretary-General that many achievements of the past four years remain fragile and that the capacity of the foundations of the State should be strengthened so as to deliver to the Afghans the basic services they require in order to improve their daily lot.

Sadly, insecurity and the pervasive drug economy remain foremost among the challenges facing Afghanistan. We share the concern of the Secretary-General about the deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan, especially through the increased employment of more sophisticated and lethal tactics, attacks against soft targets, suicide bombings, kidnappings and attacks against the education system. We strongly condemn all of those terrorist acts, which target the security and development of Afghanistan and the larger region.

It is alarming that, despite the ever-increasing presence of foreign forces in the country, anti-Government elements appear to have expanded their theatre of operations and violence into traditionally calmer areas of the west, north and north-east of the country. Undoubtedly, expediting the full expansion of the central Government's authority to the whole of the country and handing over the responsibility for the country's security to the national army and police are essential steps towards mitigating the threat of insecurity in Afghanistan.

The unabated operation of the narcotics industry poses a major threat to the achievement of peace and stability in Afghanistan and adversely affects the political and economic reconstruction of the country. It also endangers the security and stability of the region, especially that of the neighbouring countries. As noted in the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and in the report of the Secretary-General, Afghanistan produces 87 per cent of the world's opium. This pervasive and thriving economy has provided fertile ground for criminal networks, corruption, insecurity and terrorism in Afghanistan and beyond.

We support the sincere steps that the Afghan Government has taken thus far to contain the threat of narcotic drugs. Nevertheless, we believe that much more needs to be done. The magnitude of the drug trade and the immense wealth that it generates, as well as the multifaceted threat that it poses, suggest that combating it will require more concerted and resolute efforts on the part of the Government of Afghanistan and a more responsible approach by the international community, particularly by those with a broad-based military presence in Afghanistan.

Moreover, while certain efforts by the Government of Afghanistan have resulted in the reduction of opium cultivation in some regions traditionally known for producing opium, unfortunately opium production has increased throughout the whole country and particularly in the regions bordering Iran.

Notwithstanding our extensive and costly campaign against that menace, we have, unfortunately, witnessed over the past year an increase in drug trafficking emanating from Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran, located on the smuggling route from Afghanistan to Europe in the north and west and to the Persian Gulf and beyond in the south has endured much more than its share in fighting a costly and deadly war against heavily armed drug traffickers in the course of the past 25 years, losing more than 3,400 law enforcement personnel and sustaining huge material losses. We have cooperated with the international community in fighting opium cultivation in Afghanistan and have helped to promote and implement crop-substitution projects in different parts of the country. For my country, which stands at the forefront of the worldwide war against drugs, international support, especially the cooperation of Afghanistan and other neighbouring countries, is essential.

By pledging $560 million for the reconstruction of Afghanistan at the Tokyo Conference — the highest pledge in terms of the per capita income of the donor countries — the Islamic Republic of Iran is earnestly endeavouring to contribute to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development process. In fulfilment of its pledge, Iran has been engaged in various infrastructural, educational and technical activities in Afghanistan, including road construction, manpower training, electricity projects, the building of schools and vocational centres, the provision of humanitarian services and many other projects. In general, Iran's contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan has so far amounted to more than $210 million. Furthermore, Iran has incurred huge costs during the past three decades by hosting almost 3 million Afghan refugees. We hope that the new conditions in Afghanistan will facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees to their home country in a more timely and promising manner. Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in line with its long-established policy of supporting the Afghan people and Government, attended the recent London Conference and the conferences in Kabul and Doha at a very high level.

The international community, with the United Nations at the forefront, should continue its support for the Government and the people of Afghanistan in a coordinated manner as they implement the Afghanistan Compact. We are of the view that the leadership role of the Afghan Government and its ownership of the political, security and economic fields in their entirety, should be given the highest priority.

In addition, the continuation of the United Nations central role in Afghanistan is indispensable if the country is to gain from the new Compact and to build upon the accomplishments of the Bonn process. As mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, UNAMA has completed its task with respect to the Bonn Agreement, but its role does not end there. We therefore support the Secretary-General's proposal to extend the mandate of UNAMA as outlined in the report.

Before concluding, I wish to reiterate that my Government will continue with its unwavering resolve to help the Afghan Government and people in their endeavour for peace, stability and development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): Like others, I too would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary General Tom Koenigs for his briefing.

I would also like to associate myself with the statement delivered by Mr. Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

I join my colleagues in commending the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on different aspects of the situation in Afghanistan (S/2006/145). We agree in particular with the idea in that report that the situation requires sustained attention in order to strengthen ties between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Viewing Afghanistan as an integral part of Central Asia, Kazakhstan welcomes its positive achievements in the political, social and economic spheres and its involvement in regional affairs. We are strongly committed to continuing to contribute our share to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, in partnership with the Afghan authorities and the international community.

At the same time, the security situation in Afghanistan is under pressure from the rising level of insurgent attacks, particularly in the south-east and south-west of the country. In that regard, the International Security Assistance Force and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) are playing an important role on the ground. We fully support the renewal of UNAMA's mandate, as well as the central role of the United Nations in leading international efforts to assist the Afghan authorities in bringing lasting peace and prosperity to that country.

Kazakhstan welcomes the steps taken by the Government of Afghanistan to deepen interaction with international institutions involved in the counter-narcotics programme in Afghanistan, which resulted in the decline of opium cultivation in 2005. However, we still have a long way to go. During the last 10 years, the level of drug-related crimes in Central Asia has increased five-fold, and the situation tends to get worse. In our view, much work has to be done to remedy the situation with regard to illegal drug production and drug trafficking, both inside and outside of Afghanistan. We believe that one key element of the overall strategy must be the further enhancement of existing, and the establishment of new, anti-drug security belts.

With respect to the London Conference, which was attended by the Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister, Mr. Tokaev, at the invitation of the organizers, I would like to reiterate our deep gratitude to the Governments of the United Kingdom and Afghanistan for the outstanding preparation and organization of that event.

In London, Kazakhstan proposed concrete steps to support the implementation of the Afghan Compact. Kazakhstan is ready to grant scholarships to Afghan students, to sign a bilateral agreement on cooperation in the field of education and to launch a civil aviation training programme for Afghan pilots.

Kazakh companies are looking forward to participating in developing oil fields and in the construction of electricity transmission lines, pipelines, roads and houses. We hope that the established Kazakh-Afghan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation will be instrumental in further stimulating bilateral economic interaction. Kazakhstan has a particular interest in assisting Afghanistan's farmers by providing them with grain, mineral

fertilizers, agricultural equipment and mini-complexes for processing agricultural products.

In our view, the accession of Afghanistan to the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia in 2005 will greatly contribute to its further integration into the regional economy. That programme was initiated by President Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan in 1997, with the support of the Secretary-General, and is being pursued under the auspices of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Europe.

I would like to reiterate our full support for the coordinated efforts under Afghan leadership aimed at building a peaceful, viable and prosperous State.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Like others, I too would like to welcome the presence of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tom Koenigs and to thank him for his briefing. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his extensive report on Afghanistan (S/2006/145).

There have been several achievements in Afghanistan during the Bonn process, in particular in building a democratic framework. However, as the Secretary-General points out, Afghanistan still faces tremendous challenges.

At the London Conference, we renewed our joint commitments to the Afghan people. Norway fully endorsed the Afghanistan Compact and the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Those documents provide the necessary framework for further development to take place in Afghanistan and for our continued long-term support. Norway was pleased to pledge financial support to Afghanistan for the coming five-year period.

A comprehensive approach to peacebuilding is necessary in Afghanistan, and Norway therefore fully supports the three pillars of the Afghanistan Compact. The plans are ambitious. The focus now must be on implementing the Development Strategy and on reaching the benchmarks for the Afghanistan Compact. For the Afghan people, it is important to see that peace brings development.

We have four remarks regarding the main tasks ahead.

First, Norway remains concerned about the deteriorating security situation. The increase in violent attacks — including suicide bombings — is worrying. However, that does not change our commitment to Afghanistan and to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). We are reinforcing our presence in the north, including in the provincial reconstruction team in Meymana. Norway believes that strengthening security-sector reform is vital for building sustainable peace. The rule of law must be provided through a strengthened police and judicial system.

Secondly, the illegal drug production and trade represent a major concern. Any failure to tackle that problem will undermine efforts to bring about sustainable peace and development. A comprehensive approach to the problem is necessary.

Thirdly, progress on administrative reform must continue, and the Afghan authorities must strengthen their capacity to provide services to the Afghan people. It is important that the authority of the central Government is projected throughout Afghanistan.

Fourthly, further efforts are needed to ensure that human rights obligations are respected. In particular, Norway would like to draw attention to the importance of respect for women's rights. Norway places great emphasis on resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, and recently launched a national action plan to strengthen its implementation. In Afghanistan, and also in other conflict-affected countries, coordinated and sustained efforts are needed to implement that particular resolution.

Norway welcomes the interim National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan, which builds on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and reflects resolution 1325 (2000). Norway will provide support for the implementation of that Plan, inter alia by providing financial assistance through the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has played an important role through the Bonn process and by assisting the Afghan Government in establishing the new targets of the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy

and the benchmarks of the Afghanistan Compact. Norway welcomes the recommendations of the Secretary-General with regard to the future mandate of UNAMA. We support a continued and strengthened role for UNAMA in monitoring and coordinating international assistance. That includes a strengthened role for UNAMA in the consultation process between the donors and the Afghan authorities. We look forward to seeing UNAMA co-chairing the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. We would also like to underline the importance of the Board's being representative. The selection of its members must be based on a transparent and open process.

In conclusion, let me reiterate Norway's continued strong support for UNAMA in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): New Zealand congratulates the people of Afghanistan on the completion of the Bonn Agreement. The inauguration of a fully elected National Assembly in December last year marked a major achievement in Afghanistan's path towards stable democracy.

New Zealand was pleased to participate in the London Conference and the launch of the Afghanistan Compact in February. The Conference provided an important opportunity for the international community to affirm its commitment to Afghanistan for at least the next five years. Looking ahead, it will be important to ensure that those commitments provide the appropriate combination of security and development assistance to the Afghani people.

In response to Security Council resolutions in 2001, New Zealand was one of the first countries to send military forces to Afghanistan as part of the international campaign against terrorism and is one of the largest per-capita contributors. The New Zealand contribution represented an important part of our commitment in support of international efforts for global security.

Over the last four years, hundreds of our defence force personnel have served in Afghanistan at a cost of around $130 million. We believe that capable and effective Afghan army and police forces are key to ensuring Afghanistan's long-term stability. To that end, New Zealand contributes to army and police training initiatives and to developing facilities in Bamyan province for effective policing.

In that context, New Zealand would like to applaud the contribution that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and Member States have made in assisting in the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. The job is not yet complete, and New Zealand looks forward to resolutions to extend the UNAMA mandate later this month. It is important that the UNAMA mandate complement the Afghanistan Compact already agreed at the London Conference.

New Zealand remains committed to supporting Afghanistan in its progress towards political and economic stability. We have increased our development assistance by $15 million over the past three years. The New Zealand contribution is targeted at projects or programmes carried out by non-governmental organizations and by United Nations agencies, with a focus on sustainable rural livelihoods, governance, human rights and maternal and child health.

New Zealand continues to support the work of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. Human rights, including the rights of women, remain a principal area of concern for New Zealand. In that regard, we commend the increased level of participation by women in the September election as a significant step forward and encourage further initiatives to consolidate their participation in Afghanistan's political life.

Let me close by reiterating our admiration for the distance that Afghanistan as a nation has travelled in such a short time. But significant challenges still remain, and the role of the international community in supporting the efforts of the Afghan Government and people to overcome those challenges remains crucial.

Alongside others here today, New Zealand reaffirms its commitment to supporting the development and security needs of Afghanistan and to working with the Afghani people to create a safe, secure and more prosperous country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Italy.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): At the outset, I would like to offer a very sincere and warm welcome to Mr. Tom Koenigs, to congratulate him on his appointment as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for

Afghanistan, and to thank him for his comprehensive and instructive briefing. I would also like to assure the Special Representative that Italy will offer him, on the field and at the political level, the strongest support and cooperation. He can count on us.

On this occasion, our tribute should also go to his predecessor, Mr. Jean Arnault, who deserves our gratitude for the remarkable accomplishments achieved by the United Nations and the people of Afghanistan during his tenure.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. Our ongoing level of substantial engagement in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan prompts us to add a few complementary remarks.

The report of the Secretary-General draws a mixed picture of the latest developments in Afghanistan, mentioning a series of extraordinary successes in the political process, but reporting at the same time some worrying delays and difficulties in achieving our common goals in the areas of security, the rule of law, respect for human rights, the empowerment of women, and the fight against the production and trafficking of narcotics. Nevertheless, we are still convinced that the international community and the Government of Afghanistan are on the right track.

The success of the London Conference, including the finalization of the Afghanistan Compact and its endorsement by the Security Council, confirms that we all share the same basic view that the increasing ownership by the Afghan Government of the process of stabilizing and reconstructing the country must be supported by a sustained and coordinated effort of the international community, with the United Nations playing a central role. The successful holding of the parliamentary elections last September confirmed that such a joint approach is conducive to generating historic achievements. Italy has been at the front line of that endeavour, having held the command of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) since last August. The acknowledgement that the polling was not significantly affected by security incidents is therefore a matter of special pride for us.

Last August, before the Security Council, Italy stated that

> "the daunting challenges lying ahead should strengthen our commitment. Those challenges are related to the three vital and intertwined pillars of security, institution-building and economic development. No effort should be spared in tackling those three pillars in an integrated perspective" (*S/PV.5249, p. 33*).

We are therefore particularly glad that the Afghanistan Compact is built upon that very approach of complementarity between the pillars of security, governance and development. We cannot fail to stress at every possible occasion that an integrated approach addressing all three components is vital and that none of the pillars should be prioritized over the others while we define the principles and criteria that will inspire the follow-up to the provisions of the Afghanistan Compact. We are confident that the benchmarks contained in the Compact, as well as the early establishment of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, will play a crucial role in facilitating the timely and effective implementation of the document.

Italy is eager to contribute to such a process, making the best possible use of the experience and knowledge of the local context that we have been building over the past ten years, first as facilitator of the political process since the 1990s, and then as a major donor to the development programmes, the lead country and key partner for justice sector reform, a contributor to Operation Enduring Freedom, leader of the Herat provincial reconstruction team, and coordinator of all the provincial reconstruction teams in the western provinces. We are now studying how to sustain our current, extraordinary effort in terms of forces deployed on the ground — over 2,000 soldiers and the command of ISAF operations — for instance by employing our *carabinieri* and *guardia di finanza* to contribute to the training of military and border police. I will refrain here from adding to that long list of accomplishments further details on our contributions to humanitarian and development activities.

Turning to the proposals on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), as contained in the report before us, we fully support the general approach of ensuring continuity in the work of the Mission. We recommend pursuing consistency between UNAMA's structure and the organization of the Afghanistan Compact so as to guarantee full effectiveness in

fulfilling the follow-up and monitoring tasks vested in the Mission. We appreciate, in that regard, the inclusion of the mandate on the rule of law and justice reform among the responsibilities of the political office. We also welcome the proposed strengthening and expansion — security circumstances permitting — of the local offices. Strong cooperation with the provincial reconstruction teams should be foreseen as an essential component of such a process.

In conclusion, we look forward to an early endorsement by the Security Council of the recommendation contained in the report so as to allow UNAMA to continue to stand as a model for other peacebuilding processes.

Finally, let me recall once again the strong sentiments of brotherhood with the Afghan people that inspire our efforts and congratulate them for their unwavering commitment to rebuilding their country and to consolidating democracy. The challenges that we continue to face should also remind us that international peace and security are still at stake in Afghanistan and will be for some time to come.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Oh (Republic of Korea): At the outset, Mr. President, allow me to join previous speakers in thanking you for having convened this open debate on the situation in Afghanistan.

Given that the Bonn process has just been completed, and that the new framework for partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community has been forged at the recent London Conference, the subject of today's debate is especially timely.

The recent London Conference was an important occasion for the international community to renew its commitment to providing political, security and financial assistance in support of the Afghan Government's priorities. We welcome the launching of the Afghanistan Compact, which establishes a framework for future progress and will play an important role in energizing the international community and mapping its support efforts. We hope that the Compact will be faithfully implemented.

While the Compact was launched for the recovery of Afghanistan, much more remains to be done in order to bring this about comprehensively. Among other concerns, a deteriorating security situation, coupled with uncontrolled violence and criminal drug trafficking, hamper not only the reconstruction process, but also the implementation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

As for the security situation in Afghanistan, we are deeply concerned about the continuing instability in some areas of the country. Security throughout the country should be improved, and the Afghan security forces should be further strengthened to help in achieving that good. In this regard, we welcome the recent adoption by NATO of a revised operational plan allowing the continued expansion of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) across Afghanistan and providing training and operational support to Afghan security forces.

We are also concerned by the increasing threat that drug trafficking poses to the national security, social development and governance of Afghanistan. Unless the Afghan people can find other sources of income, many will be tempted to engage in that criminal business. We therefore share the view that the international community and the Afghan Government should work together to deal with this serious problem, which affects almost every aspect of Afghanistan's security and development. My Government welcomes the updated national drug control strategy presented by the Afghan Government at the London Conference and stands ready to join the international support for the strategy by contributing to the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund.

To deal with these ongoing challenges, active efforts by the Afghan Government, in a spirit of Afghan ownership, must go hand in hand with unceasing assistance from the international community. In this regard, we note that many countries, including the Republic of Korea, announced new financial assistance for Afghanistan at the London Conference. We believe that these announcements demonstrate donors' continuing confidence in Afghanistan. This is a credit to President Karzai's leadership and to the clear vision evident in the Interim National Development Strategy.

The Republic of Korea has been a strong supporter of the reconstruction process of Afghanistan. Building upon our contribution of approximately $60 million in grant aid to Afghanistan over the past four years, Korea plans to expand its assistance to

Afghanistan in line with the new Afghanistan Compact. We have set aside $20 million for the next three years in order to further our projects in the areas of human resources development, agricultural and rural area development and public administration efficiency. In addition, reconstruction and medical units from my country have been contributing to the Afghan reconstruction process since their deployment in February 2002. We pledge to maintain our commitment to the reconstruction, development and stabilization of Afghanistan in the years ahead.

Mr. Laurin (Canada): Canada is pleased to have the opportunity to address the Security Council on Afghanistan. We express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for having convened this open debate.

Let me begin by congratulating Mr. Tom Koenigs, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and assuring him of our fullest cooperation. We also take this opportunity to thank his predecessor, Mr. Jean Arnault, and to congratulate him on his singular achievements in Afghanistan.

Canada has made a clear commitment to the emergence of a stable, secure, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. We are among the largest contributors to Afghanistan's recovery and have been since 11 September 2001. Our contributions have been both human and financial, our support consistent and steadfast. Our strong commitment to the future of Afghanistan was highlighted by the visit by Prime Minister Harper to Afghanistan earlier this week. Indeed, Prime Minister Harper left Afghanistan only this morning, after having spent two days there, during which he met with President Karzai and senior officials, as well as with Canadian troops, diplomats and reconstruction workers. Prime Minister Harper's meeting with President Karzai was his first meeting with a head of State since taking office in January.

In the years since 2001, over 14,000 Canadian forces personnel have been deployed in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom missions. With the most recent deployment of 2,200 Canadian forces personnel, Canada assumed command of coalition forces in Kandahar and five surrounding southern provinces. This is our second tour in Kandahar. We have always deployed our soldiers where they were most needed. Our engagement has not been without cost. Some Canadians have lost their lives, and others have been injured. We understand what is at stake and are prepared to do our part, including in the more difficult regions of Afghanistan.

At the same time, we recognize that success cannot be ensured by military means alone, but rather requires the concomitant support to Afghan governance and development. For this reason, Afghanistan is Canada's largest recipient of development assistance. On 9 March, Canada announced an additional $40 million in development funding for Afghanistan, bringing Canada's total contributions to over $650 million. We also have a track record for disbursing our pledges. Canada took command of a provincial reconstruction team in Kandahar in August 2005 and recently almost doubled the size of its embassy, all of which are indications of the degree of our commitment.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for peace and security. The report rightly emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to engagement in Afghanistan, an approach that is enshrined in the documents recently adopted in London at the Afghanistan Conference. Canada welcomes the formation of a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, an indispensable body that Canada championed and helped to design. The Board will ensure greater coherence of efforts by the Afghan Government with the international community in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We will look to the Board to focus on practical problem-solving issues, drawing lessons from those most heavily engaged, identifying any gaps as they emerge and ensuring coherence across the three independent pillars of the Compact. We will thus make sure that the Board is supported by an effective secretariat.

In supporting the Compact, Canada will focus on three main areas: security, governance and poverty reduction. If we are to succeed, it will take both military and civilian engagement. With their international and Afghan partners, the Canadian forces have helped to create a secure environment in which nascent Afghan governance institutions can begin to grow. That support has also allowed Canadian and other civilians deployed to Afghanistan to actively support the complex task of institution-building. It is only by building effective and accountable institutions in Kabul and across Afghanistan that we can ensure that our investment lasts long beyond our engagement.

(*spoke in French*)

The acts of violence perpetrated recently in certain regions of Afghanistan show that now is not the time to let down our guard. Al-Qaida and the Taliban remain active, challenging the Afghan and international security forces. The resort to suicide bomb attacks is a worrisome development that requires an immediate response, including on the part of Afghanistan's neighbours.

At the same time, the narcotics trade is jeopardizing governmental institutions. Corruption is eroding the people's trust. The foundations for an effective, transparent and accessible system have still not been laid. These threats are closely linked to drug money, contributing to corruption and subverting the rule of law.

The response must be robust and multiform. The establishment of a responsible and democratic Government that respects the rights of individuals, gives its citizens a voice in that area and undertakes measures to fulfil their aspirations is essential to any comprehensive solution to these problems.

As noted by the Secretary-General in his report, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has a crucial role to play in strengthening all the new governance institutions of the Afghan State, including through capacity-building. To that end, UNAMA must increase its own capacities to intervene on the ground in the areas of individual rights, respect for the rule of law, the police and justice. Canada continues to support UNAMA by aiding the efforts of police and corrections advisers, and we hope that other countries will do likewise.

Inspired by the resolve of the Afghan people to build a better future for themselves, Canada remains prepared to help Afghanistan carry out the commitments set out in the Compact.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to felicitate you, Sir, and the delegation of Argentina on the skilful manner in which Argentina is guiding the work of the Security Council this month. May I also congratulate Ambassador Bolton and the United States delegation for the successful and eventful United States presidency last month. I would also like to wish Ambassador Wang Guangya of China a successful presidency next month.

The Pakistan delegation expresses its gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Tom Koenigs, for his briefing to the Council today and to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2006/145). Let me also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Koenigs' predecessor, Mr. Jean Arnault. Pakistan fully supports the continuation of the important role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. We also support the international security assistance for Afghanistan.

The Secretary-General's report outlines the considerable progress made in Afghanistan in fulfilling the benchmarks of the Bonn process. We wish to congratulate President Karzai and the fraternal people of Afghanistan on those achievements.

Unfortunately, there are also many outstanding challenges that remain to be overcome — especially security, narcotics, crime, warlordism and development. The Afghanistan Compact, adopted at the London Conference, endorsed a comprehensive plan to address those challenges in order to restore peace and security and to build prosperity in Afghanistan. The commitments undertaken by the Afghan Government and its international partners under the Compact will, we hope, be fulfilled.

Pakistan and Afghanistan enjoy a close and symbiotic relationship rooted in geography, history, shared ethnicity and a common faith. Our destinies are inextricably linked. Peace in Afghanistan reinforces peace and tranquillity in Pakistan. Peace in Afghanistan will enable both nations to serve as the bridge for trade and commerce between Central Asia, South Asia and beyond. The success of the endeavours for peace and prosperity in Afghanistan is therefore vital for Pakistan.

More than 25 years ago, the Pakistani people welcomed nearly 4 million of their Afghan brothers with open arms. We hosted them mostly without the generosity of external assistance. Three million Afghans still remain in Pakistan. In accordance with our traditions and with the principles of humanitarian law, Pakistan has not obliged them to return involuntarily to their country. Yet return they should, and we trust that conditions will soon be created that will enable them to do so in dignity and honour.

As history will recount, Pakistan's hospitality during Afghanistan's most difficult years created enduring problems for Pakistan, including the rise of extremism and the presence of terrorism. We are addressing those phenomena resolutely and, we believe, successfully.

Pakistan has adopted short- and long-term strategies to address the problems of terrorism and extremism. We have captured more than 600 Al-Qaida terrorists, most of whom infiltrated Pakistan after 11 September 2001. We have acted resolutely against Taliban terrorism, in accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1267 (1999). We have deployed more than 80,000 troops on our western border with Afghanistan to prevent the infiltration or ex-filtration by Al-Qaida and other terrorists. Concurrently, we are investing in infrastructure and socio-economic developments of these so-far unsettled frontier regions. Pakistan has also launched major military operations in some of our tribal areas to eliminate the presence of foreign terrorists and their supporters. More than 600 Pakistani soldiers have lost their lives in the 75 operations conducted by Pakistani security forces. I should like to recall that those casualties are greater than all of those suffered by Coalition forces in Afghanistan.

No one, therefore, can question Pakistan's commitment and determination to succeed in defeating terrorism. A comprehensive approach is required to address the challenges of terrorism and criminal violence and insurgency in Afghanistan. The terrorist and other violent incidents in Afghanistan are taking place not only in the south and south-east but in various other parts of the country. They can be prevented by effective action within Afghanistan by the Afghan national forces and international coalition forces. To ensure success, the root causes of such violence — extremism, warlordism, the narcotics trade and local rivalries — will all need to be addressed patiently and sincerely. The failure to do so cannot be externalized.

Certainly, border security and control is essential in order to prevent the infiltration into Pakistan or Afghanistan of terrorists or other violent criminals. As I said, Pakistan has deployed 80,000 troops to do so on our side. A matching effort is required on the other side if the hammer and anvil strategy is to work. Moreover, this endeavour cannot succeed without close cooperation in intelligence-sharing, in real time. We can achieve this in the Tripartite Commission, as well as through close and constant bilateral contacts.

Pakistan has also decided to take additional actions. We will fence parts of the border to reinforce interdiction by our forces. We will also seek to eliminate terrorist elements that may be located in Afghan refugee camps and elsewhere among the refugee population.

Together with intelligence-sharing, Pakistan expects its partners to enhance Pakistan's capabilities for interdiction and counter-terrorism through the provision of electronic and other equipment, especially additional helicopters, with a view to enhancing mobility and reaction time. Our requirements have been conveyed to our partners.

Finally, joint counter-terrorism operations must be conducted with full adherence to the principles of international law, including those incorporated in the Kabul Declaration, regarding respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. Pakistan will not countenance any violation of those principles.

Pakistan believes that Afghanistan, with the support of the international community and through cooperation with its neighbours, can succeed in meeting the challenges of security, governance and development. Pakistan wishes to make the maximum contribution to the success of the Afghanistan Compact. An essential component of the Compact is to ensure sustainable and rapid development in Afghanistan.

In London, Pakistan supplemented its earlier commitment of $200 million with an additional pledge of $50 million for Afghanistan's development. We have made special arrangements to facilitate transit trade to and from Afghanistan. Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was $1.2 billion last year, which we hope will grow to $2 billion this year. We have reached an agreement with the United States on the creation of industrial zones on the border with Afghanistan whose goods will be allowed duty-free access to the United States market.

Pakistan is convinced that, given mutual goodwill and enhanced trust, Afghanistan and Pakistan will be able to cooperate closely to build peace and security in the region and ensure prosperity for our peoples, whose historical and fraternal bonds are strong enough to withstand the vicissitudes of politics and posturing by

those who wish to sow the seeds of division and discord between us.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to me and the delegation of Argentina.

I give the floor to Mr. Tom Koenigs, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, to respond to comments and questions.

Mr. Koenigs: First of all, I would like to thank Council members very much for the continued support that they have expressed, unanimously, for the peace process in Afghanistan and for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. On a personal note, I would like to thank the Council very much for the warm welcome and the support expressed for me in meeting the difficult challenges of the job that I have taken on.

I appreciate very much the suggestion of the representative of Japan regarding a visit by the Security Council to Afghanistan, which would express once again the commitment of the Council, and we will do everything to prepare ourselves for such a visit.

All speakers expressed — and we share — concerns about the security situation, violations of human rights, the inequality with regard to women's rights and issues relating to poppy cultivation and drug trafficking. Be assured that this is a major challenge for the Afghan Government, for the donor community as a whole and for the United Nations and all of its funds and agencies, including UNAMA.

We will continue to develop our activities on the basis of the principle of Afghan ownership with regard to all development in Afghanistan. We will step back, behind the leadership of the Afghan Government, in each and every operation. In addition to the briefing that I gave, I was asked to explain some of the questions posed by the representative of Denmark, and I would like to respond. Yes, we will continue the active dialogue with the Government institutions at the national level and, particularly, the provincial level. Some speakers commented on our proposal for the enlargement of the UNAMA presence in the provinces. After the election, some of the locations were vacated by international assistance personnel, so some of the provinces have space which can be utilized by the agencies and by sub-offices in the field through UNAMA. We would like to use some of those facilities and co-locate with United Nations agencies already present so as to increase both the visibility of international support and assistance to the political institutions of the Afghan Government. This inclusivity might improve the security situation in those areas, because one of our experiences in the north was that, where there is an international presence, where there is a Government presence and where there is an office from our side, the security situation can improve. Nevertheless, I know that we have to assess the security situation prevailing in those provinces before we make that outreach. We will not create new regional offices, but from the regional offices we would like to reach out with small entities into those places where that is advisable.

The split between the two pillars in UNAMA is more administrative than substantive in nature. Through my leadership, I will ensure that they cooperate so that human rights and gender, as overarching elements in the respective pillars, are not separated. I shall ensure that there is close coordination between those two elements of our mandate.

I will certainly prioritize reasonable and sophisticated recruitment, in particular as regards our political staff in the region. In coming to the Mission, I learned that the human capital and quality of our staff is the main asset in our efficiency and success. The respect we have gained, not only in the international community but in particular among the Afghan authorities and people in general, is due to the high quality of our staff. We will do everything to maintain it, and even to strengthen it.

The representative of Slovakia asked about how we will compose the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, and when it will be operational. I would be pleased if it could be operational as soon as possible. I have spoken on that matter to the President of Afghanistan, who has expressed the same opinion. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to reconcile the two principles for such a joint coordination and monitoring board: effectiveness and representativity. The representativity pertains to donors, troop contributors and regional stakeholders. Work is still in progress, and I will take the opportunity provided by my visit to New York to speak with some of the stakeholders in question.

I have very much appreciated the fact that the representative of the United States stressed the importance of human capital development in Afghanistan. That is one of our main points to be stressed in the future, because Afghan ownership means the development of Afghan capacity in the country. We have dedicated our efforts in Kabul and the provinces to that aim.

Finally, let me once again express my gratitude for the unanimous support UNAMA enjoys from the members of the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Koenigs for his clarifications and comments. I also thank him once again for being with us. We hope to see him soon, once we adopt the resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, at the end of March.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.55 p.m.